Gattica THE Leith

TALES OF AN EVENING,

WRITTEN BY THE CELEBRATED

MARMONTEL,

BEING THE THIRD VOLUME OF HIS

NEW MORAL TALES:

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE HONEST BRETON.

PERTH:

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BRITISH MUSEUM
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JUN

TALES OF AN EVENING.

ADVERTISEMENT.

DURING the late diſturbances at Paris, a few friends who had retired to the country from the confuſion of the metropolis, were at a loſs for entertainment one evening, having exhauſted their obſervations and ſpeculative enquiries as to the probable iſſue of affairs. Madame de Verval, the Lady of the houſe, who was herſelf very fond of ſtory telling, and miſtreſs of that accompliſhment in a very ſuperior degree, propoſed that each of the company ſhould by turns relate the happieſt, or, *one of the happieſt* events in their lives, which could be revealed with propriety.

The company univerſally approved of the propoſal, and it was agreed upon, that the youngeſt ſhould begin firſt. "Let me intreat," ſaid Juliet, "that any of the reſt of the company but me

 begin."

begin."——"Come then," replied her mother, "your couſin Dervis will teach you how to get the better of that baſhfulneſs, which does not always proceed from modeſty."—"It is the buſineſs of an Advocate, indeed," anſwered Juliet, in a low voice, "to ſpeak when he thinks fit, and in what manner he thinks proper; but for my part, I never plead, nor have I been much in the practice of ſtory telling; beſides M. Dervis is upwards of twenty-three, and I am not yet eighteen—that makes a great difference, you know."——

THE

THE FATHER's SECRET.

TALE FIRST.

"THE event in my life which was at once the happieſt, and affected me in the moſt ſenſible manner, I will relate to the company, provided my father does not object to my ſpeaking of him." —"Let us hear it," replied the ſage Ormiſan, "nothing ſhould hinder us to ſpeak of a father, if we do not ſpeak ill of him, or too flatteringly."

Dervis then proceeded thus,

"My mother was ſo very indulgent," ſaid he, much affected, "that ſhe was univerſally accuſed of ſpoiling her children. There is no doubt, that when our father chaſtened us, ſhe ſeemed always to be more hurt, than we were ourſelves. If any excuſe for our faults could be deviſed, ſhe was the firſt to diſcover it, and if none, ſhe generally invented one. She chid us *ſometimes;* but her reproofs were ſo gentle, that they had more the appearance of love; and when a little anger gently depreſſed her finely arched eye brows, her eyes notwithſtanding, *looked* ſo much tenderneſs, that the pardon and threatening were confounded together.

If her indulgence was ſo remarkable, when we were to blame, it may eaſily be conceived, what viſible joy ſhe ſhewed, when we behaved to her ſatisfaction; it was apparent in every look. When any one complimented her on her fine complexion, and youthful beauty (for indeed time had made little impreſſion on her looks)—"My children," *would ſhe ſay,* "*have the gift of renewing my age.*"

As Dervis ſaid this, he pauſed, to breathe a little, and wipe the tears which fell from his eyes—"Excuſe me", ſaid he, "I ſpeak of my mother!"—As Juliet attended to her couſin, ſhe looked to her own mother, while her beautiful black eyes ſparkled with moiſtened languor.

"This exceſs of partial kindneſs," ſaid Dervis, "it was neceſſary for me to mention, as an excuſe for my injuſtice. As my father is preſent, I cannot with propriety ſpeak of his temper and diſpoſitions; he thought a diſtant and authoritative ſeverity was the only cure for the miſchief, which our mother's fond indulgence might do us. He therefore aſſumed the diſagreable office of making us always tremble when in his preſence. The moſt trifling faults he ſharply reproved, the more important ones he puniſhed; and any thing meritorious about

about his children, he appeared to think was his return for the care and pains he took about our improvement, as nature's debt, and as the price of our education: nay, he often heard us praiſed without any appearance of ſatisfaction.—"It is the partiality of your friends," he would often ſay, "go on and improve, that they may not find it neceſſary to flatter me by over-rating any talents you poſſeſs."

"We always conſidered our father as virtuous and juſt; but we could never think him kind or affectionate to us. When I had attained my fifteenth year, I myſelf was ignorant of his real feelings towards us; and till then I had been conducted by two motives only, fear for exciting his anger, or too much affecting my mother; this laſt ſentiment, as it was I own, the moſt tender of the two, was of conſequence, proportionably more powerful; ſo that when I was the mean of my father reproaching *her*, for *my* faults, conſidering them as proceeding from her indulgence, what ſhe felt pained me to the heart. My tears were mingled with her's, and in this way my father puniſhed me. She died, and with her my juvenile days ended. Grief ripened my ways of thinking and ſentiments together. One year of mourning, ſeemed to be an age

in my eyes. My employments and avocations became more ſerious; and my ſtudies, when I had again reſolution to ſet about them, were no longer painful to me, but a relief from oppreſſive thought. The crowd of the univerſity ſeemed a deſart in my view; and the diverſions of my companions were no longer engaging. Tears, painful recollection of my loſt mother, and my books, as my only recreation, filled up my days, nay, and my nights! while I ſtudied rhetoric. I ſometimes imagined I ſaw my mother before me; ſometimes I fancied I heard her ſay, "*Cultivate your underſtanding and refine your manners; become the pride and conſolation of your father; make him happy, if he can be ſo without me, and let his happineſs ſpring from his children.*" By ſuch illuſions, my induſtry redoubled, I found freſh ſpirit. I now enjoyed a ſuperiority in the claſs, which I had never before done, till my application was thus piouſly intent; and when the time for the diſtribution of prizes came, I poſſeſſed a conſiderable advantage above my rivals, by the leſſons which misfortune had taught me."

"Influenced by a vague deſign to do well, the great ſucceſs I enjoyed, I neither expected nor wiſhed. I was ignorant of the extent of it, but my inſtructor was ſenſible of it. He viſited my father at times,

times, and was always well received, but he had never discovered in him any symptoms of that satisfaction which parents usually shew, when they are informed of the good appearance of their children. He no doubt wished to keep *his secret.*"

"My Tutor observing that my father's serene gravity, was not easily affected, and at same time anxious to overcome this seeming indifference, took the common way of endeavouring to surprise him greatly. He invited him to be present, as is usual, at the distribution of the prizes. "Is there any particular reason for my being present?" said my father in a careless manner; "that the judges only know, they do not generally inform us," replied my preceptor—"If not, what business have I there? —You will at least witness a source of emulation— "As well as of vanity!—No, sir," said the professor, "Vanity is the companion of trifling matters, but our victories are not trifling vain honours for youth. The love of labour, and an inclination for study, are useful in every stage of life, and success in their pursuit is praise-worthy." "You are very right," said my father, "and I shall be much pleased to observe that my son envies the Candidates that may prove successful."

"He

"He was ſo good as accept the invitation. I need not mention my pleaſing ſurprize when I obſerved him enter and take his place in a diſtant corner of the hall.——Where, where ſhall I hide myſelf, if I am unſucceſsful to day? thought I. But ſurely they would not have been ſo cruel as to invite my father in that caſe!—I hope not!—But while I hoped, I trembled. I now for the firſt time felt a thirſt for fame, attended by all its concomitant fears. My claſs was luckily firſt called. *All the three firſt Prizes were adjudged to me!!!*——My name was three times repeated in my father's hearing!—He ſaw me three times *crowned;* then, loaded with laurels and books, amidſt plaudits from every ſide, he ſaw me come down from the ſtage, preſs through the croud and embrace his knees.——He held me in his arms;—at length his violent emotion diſcovered *his ſecret;*——he preſſed me to his breaſt, and from his eyes guſhed tears of pleaſure——"My dear father;" cried I, "were SHE but alive."—The effect which theſe words produced was ſo great; our feelings were ſo violently rouſed, that we found it neceſſary to retire to another room—"Come, come, my dear ſon," ſaid my father, "come with me into the carriage; I feel, I cannot live without you; let us therefore in future live together."

As

As ſoon as we were ſat in the carriage, he embraced me again—"Judge," ſaid he, "whether you have an affectionate father or not;——Judge now, whether he loves his children.——You now know *my ſecret!* my weakneſs; do not diſcloſe it, particularly to your younger brothers."—They were all at Jully—"My father," ſaid I, "do conſider your children have now no mother; their tender age has its own griefs and pains;—the motherly balſam that formerly diſtilled into their young boſoms now flows no longer. Her tender and affectionate *weakneſs*, which we frequently took advantage of, is now no longer ſo dangerous as you feared. Be ſtill a father, by ſupporting your wonted reſpect and authority;—but at times, *Be a Mother likewiſe.*—"Yes, my ſon," replied he, "I will henceforth unite theſe characters; I feel them both within me; with you however, I will act in ſtill another capacity—the character of *your Friend* is that I will now delight in. Let us now ſwear to poſſeſs as it were the ſame ſoul, and in no caſe diſſemble any feeling from each other!"

How is it I cannot expreſs with what tranſport I took and received this Oath of Friendſhip. It was I am convinced—

THE HAPPIEST HOUR OF MY PAST LIFE,

and it remains an inexhauſtible Source of

Pleaſure for my Hours to come!

THE YOUNG BARRISTER.

TALE SECOND.

"IT is your turn now, Madamoiſelle," ſaid d' Ormiſan; "as I am rather affected with what I have juſt heard," replied Juliet, "will you be good enough to give me a little pauſe for recollection, and recovering my voice, by taking my place——By all means," ſaid her Uncle, "and I am the rather diſpoſed to it, as the day which Dervis has juſt appropriated to *himſelf, as his day of happineſs*, recalls another to my mind, for which I am indebted to him, but which in truth is *my Day alone.*

My ſon Dervis, had been newly appointed to his office, and was preparing to ſpeak for the firſt time in a very material cauſe. It was upon a claim which had been brought againſt the widow and children of one M. de Cloſade."——"Cloſade," interrupted the Baron de Driſac; "I was acquainted with him; he was my countryman; a young man of great bravery and good expectations. Fortune had been rather harſh to him, but he was again reſtored to her good graces, by coming to the fortune of his wife's uncle." "This was the fortune," rejoined

joined Ormiſan, "which this action was brought to deprive her of. It was raiſed at the inſtance of the Marchioneſs de V. a proud, intriguing, buſy woman, ſedulouſly courting friends both at city and court; having great *influence*, but little *reſpect*."

This action, which in itſelf ſtood upon very ſimple grounds, but now very deeply complicated by the chicanery of law, drew much public attention. The trial occupied two days at the Chatelet, after the cloſing of evidence by Dervis, the young *Avocat du Roy*, I obſerved it occupied a great deal of his thought; and although I was very thoroughly ſenſible of the deep laid iniquitous plan, which had been formed againſt the widow, I declined ſpeaking to him on the ſubject. The authority of a father, might prove too heavy, and ſo turn the ſcale; I determined to leave my ſon to the dictates of his own breaſt, to be conducted by his own judgment. I committed him therefore to his own information, but marked attentively what ſeemed to be paſſing within him, and that with a painful anxiety, which however I carefully concealed from him.

I obſerved that he was beſet by ſolicitations, not on the widow's behalf.——She viſited her judge alone;—he received her very coolly; and rather inattentively.

inattentively.—"Who!—I, father!"——He permitted her to wait a full quarter of an hour in his parlour. I reckoned the minutes *very impatiently, I muſt own; when ſhe got audience, it was ſhort.*—"I heard her ſtory attentively, however." "You conducted her to the door with ſuch a dignified, ſtately and careleſs air that I could have felt diſpoſed to beat you."

The widow was ſoon followed by Madam de V's council. He had full time to expatiate as he pleaſed; he got a good hour at leaſt, though the poor widow had but a Quarter.—"I confeſs, Father, he was longer with me, but then you know, one ounce of reaſon will at any time outweigh a pound of words."

A dignified ſelf-important prelate ſoon followed the Orator. He meaſured his ſteps as he came up ſtairs, ſtepped ſolemnly forward, and was announced in form. You came forward to receive him; *he ſeated himſelf* in an arm chair; for my own part, while I watched him attentively from my cabinet, I ſaw plainly from his countenance and geſtures, that he was dictating your ſentence for you.—"No, no, father, he ſcarcely ever mentioned the ſuit; the iſſue of that he ſeemed to conſider as queſtionleſs,

queſtionleſs, but he talked of himſelf, and of you and I. He vaunted greatly of his influence at court, and his weight with thoſe in power, in diſpoſing of places; he himſelf was a member of the privy council, and was a favourite with the king. He interrogated me as to my plan of life, whether I intended to ſpend my days, in the mean employment of a Barriſter? and aſked if I thought it ſuitable for a perſon of my family and talents to get into years among the duſty benches of the bar? The council was the place for me to ſhine, and added he, I ſee clearly you would make but one ſtep from the council to the miniſtry. He particularly cautioned me againſt treading in my father's footſteps, who had never aſpired to any place, amidſt many opportunities.—The public voice, ſaid he, has twenty times pointed to him, as a proper perſon for the moſt important places; while the court uniformly coincided with public opinion; but he always declined office. Be adviſed by me, ſir, follow you a different road, and depend upon it, you will find weighty friends."—"I ſuppoſed," ſaid d'Ormiſan, "that ſome perſon would be obliging enough to take upon him the charge of your fortune upon that occaſion; and I now underſtand the reaſon of that modeſt, diffident and grateful air, with which you conducted this dignitary to the door."—"Was

it not incumbent on me, father, to thank him for the favours he had been heaping upon me."

"The great man with the ribbon, who took his place, would doubtleſs eſtabliſh this prelate's ſplendid expectations." "Far from it, father, from him I heard nothing, but alarming caveats as to the critical and hazardous buſineſs I had embarked in. He told me, the public had but one ſentiment and opinion as to Madame de V's law ſuit. The rank of her family placed her beyond all ſuſpicion of interfering in a bad cauſe. A deciſion was already given both at court and in the city; and my future reputation depended on the judgment I pronounced on this occaſion. I ſpeak not to you at preſent, (ſaid he) as a ſolicitor, but as an old friend of your family, anxious that you ſhould enjoy that reſpect, and reputation, which you have every title to expect."

"An inſtructive leſſon truly," ſaid d'Ormiſan, "and he would no doubt march off very proud of having given it. You were now fully prepared to receive the lady herſelf, who appeared accordingly the moment he was gone. How beautiful ſhe was! with what a triumphant look ſhe addreſſed her judge, when you appeared to receive her!—*Judge!* She laughed heartily as ſhe pronounced the word."

—"Is

—"Is it indeed *you*, Mr Attorney General, I have now to ſolicit? I own the long robe is a delightful privilege; in truth nothing leſs than a law ſuit, could at all juſtify a lady of my years and appearance, in paying a morning viſit to ſo young and handſome a man."

"Madam," replied I, with my eyes on the ground and bluſhing, "I have always conſidered ſolicitations as unneceſſary, as ſometimes indeed embarraſſing, nay even hazardous—it always appeared enigmatical to me, what any one could ſolicit from his judge. To aſk his attention, would be an affront; favours, an inſult. Strict, plain equity, is every thing to be expected, and to hear it *ſolicited*, muſt be humbling indeed.

"I think you are very right," ſaid Madame, "therefore don't ſuppoſe that I come hither a litigious client to harraſs you about my cauſe. I have heard you ſpoken of as a very amiable man, remarkable for wit and other accompliſhments (excuſe my repeating what may to you appear fulſome adulation) and was anxious for your acquaintance, that I might ſuggeſt to you, to how much greater purpoſe a man of your parts and merit would appear in the faſhionable world, than at the bar. As you

have been appointed to it, plead my cauſe, but let it be the laſt; and if you will be conducted by me, let your future pleadings be at the bar of taſte, pleaſure and the graces, where ſuch a Barriſter muſt always ſhine. The beſt company attend my ſupper parties, particularly the handſomeſt women. I expect you will make one, ſo ſoon as my cauſe is ended. Pray do not forget, if agreeable to you. With this requeſt, I bid you adieu, with all imaginable reſpect for the long robe, even on ſhoulders of twenty years."—This was the purport of her viſit, after which I ſhut myſelf up to reflect deliberately on the pleading and buſineſs of the following day.

"I ſaw her," ſaid d'Ormiſan, "come out from you, with even more animation and triumph in her eyes than when ſhe entered; and felt a kind of gloomy apprehenſion depreſs my ſpirits, far from flattering to you. You appeared thoughtful at dinner."—"My thoughts were occupied."—"No doubt they were, but with what pray?"—"This was the problem in my mind. I hinted at the viſits you had received; you anſwered me in an abrupt diſtant way; and I imagined I diſcovered in your replies certain evidences of perplexity; ſo that I ſuffered you to retire to your apartment, without

inſiſting

inſiſting farther. To confeſs the truth, this matter threw me into violent agitation all the evening;—nay I was in a fever through the night. My recollection brought again the poor widow alone, abaſhed before you, at a loſs in what manner, or whether ſhe ſhould ſpeak at all, and diſmiſſed with a quarter of an hour's audience; on the other hand, I recollected the forwardneſs of the ſolicitor, the aſſurance of the biſhop, the glare of the blue ribbon; but in a particular manner, the dazzling beauty of the Marchioneſs, her noble appearance, eaſy walk, her ſhape, the counter part of Diana, with the look of Venus, when ſhe deigned to ſoften the fire of her eyes; the perſuaſion of her voice, the illuſion of what ſhe ſaid, with all the artifices of coquetry; in ſhort every thing that can miſlead, by dazzling a young man's underſtanding, preſented itſelf to my mind, in colours no doubt heightened. Ten thouſand times did I reprobate the practice of ſolicitation. The vanity of the magiſtrates who had permitted it to become cuſtomary I abominated—my imagination was crowded with evil preſages; in a word, I could not reſt. And when I obſerved you go out the following day, for the important duties you were that day for the firſt time to perform, I trembled with apprehenſion. By degrees however, I charged myſelf with injuſ-

tice; I called to mind your diſpoſition, and above all your principles; often, nay a hundred times I ſaid to myſelf, my Dervis is incapable of a baſe action. My own heart bore teſtimony to the integrity of yours; while again, ſeduction, miſtake, inexperience, nay the unfortunate influence and prepoſſeſſion of thoſe you had ſeen might miſlead you. Why, thought I, did I not venture, at this time, to examine into your ideas, and become the confidant of your opinion, by hearing you reaſon on the ſubject? your judgment would have been more fully deliberated and equally free from influence. Equity may be inſtructed, though not biaſſed. Such painful diſtreſſing thoughts affected me for an hour, and that to ſuch a degree, that I found my anxiety of mind intolerable. Wrapped up in a great coat, and pulling my hat over my eyes, I took my cane in my hand and entered amongſt the croud which filled the hall where the cauſe was to be tried.

"I trembled at the firſt part of your ſpeech; you painted the cauſe of the Marchioneſs with ſuch a ſemblance of rectitude, dwelling ſo forcibly on her arguments, and giving them ſo very ſpecious an appearance, that I was led to repeat every moment to myſelf, *I am wretched;* my ſon is no longer worthy

worthy of my eſteem! By degrees I began to hope better things of you, when you proceeded to oppoſe to theſe arguments, the widow's titles, and ſuffered ſome rays of truth and equity to gleam forth. The clouds gradually diſpelled; the good cauſe broke forth to ſight, and you put it in ſo clear a point of view, as to place the deſign of the teſtator in a brilliant light; you clearly diſcovered, how groſsly litigious ſophiſtry, proceeding upon an immaterial informality, are oppoſed and contrary to the real ſpirit of the law, which never ſuffers chicane or trick, and the eſſence of which is ſimplicity, rectitude and good faith: you gave ſo intereſting a deſcription of the real and helpleſs ſituation of the widow and family of a young and brave officer, who had fallen in the ſervice of the ſtate; and contraſted it ſo ſtrikingly with the wealth and advantageous ſituation of the V. family; you rendered the titles of weakneſs and misfortune ſo ſacred, that the ſentence of the judges was dictated by the unanimous voice of all who heard you. As for me, I did not hear the ſentence. The extent of my joy, was too much for me—I fainted away among the people. Some perſon aſide knew me, for as I fell, I recollect to have heard a voice repeat, *It is his father!* They carried me into an adjoining room, and when I recovered, I found myſelf

ſelf in the arms of my Dervis. I can ſcarcely ſuppoſe it poſſible to be

happier than I was at that moment;

this I well know, that a very gentle degree of emotion more than I then felt, muſt have ended my days;—*but the truth is, that had I the choice,*

ſuch is the death I would wiſh to die.

THE MILL.

TALE THIRD.

"WHAT have I to relate, after ſuch intereſting incidents?" ſaid Juliet. "Some happy event adapted to your years," replied her mother—"Can you recollect none?"—"You, my dear mamma, occaſion ſo many pleaſing and happy ſenſations to me every day, that in ſhort my life contains nothing elſe, and I am quite familiar with them;—however, the felicity I am now to mention I did not expect.

This caſtle of Verval, was the place of my birth; my mother wiſhed to ſuckle me; ſhe always thought ſuckling a pleaſure."—"Nay, Juliet, a duty alſo," —whiſpered her mother in a low tone of voice; "this however, her health would not admit; but

ſhe

ſhe carefully ſelected the beſt nurſe which the neighbourhood afforded; and this my good nurſe, was likewiſe a good woman. My mother has often aſſured me, that next to the cares and feelings of maternal love, no aſſiduities could be greater than thoſe which this excellent nurſe paid me during my infancy. The manner in which ſhe executed the duties of a ſecond mother, evidently diſcovered the ſenſe ſhe had of their importance. She conducted herſelf in a manner ſo noble, yet pleaſingly gentle, that it had every appearance of piety, and gave even the meaneſt duties, an air of religion. My mother would at times look unhappy that ſhe could not take herſelf the nurſe's place; "had your health admitted, madam," would ſhe ſay, "of your ſuckling Juliet yourſelf, I would never had got her; nor would I have parted with my own infant to take charge of yours, but becauſe of the ſervice you do to the country around; it was neceſſary for ſome one of us to diſcharge a debt contracted by ſo many unhappy people; and as your choice has fallen upon me, doubtleſs it was God's will I ſhould perform it. Envy me not this happineſs. In your preſent weakly ſituation, your attempting to ſuckle the infant, would have been injurious both to yourſelf and the child. Be not apprehenſive of my robbing nature of her part of the affections of this ſweet innocent.

The

The moment ſhe acquires diſcernment to diſtinguiſh you from all other women, to you alone, will all her attention be directed."

"This language is elegant enough for a plain country woman," ſaid Dervis, with rather a ſatyrical glance.—"Sir," rejoined Juliet, "I pretend not to a literal repetition of her language, the tranſlation however I believe is faithful. I ſhall ſee to get you acquainted with this *plain country woman*, and with all his pride, even Dervis ſhall reſpect her." The tone and geſture with which theſe words were delivered, made d'Ormiſan and Olympia ſmile; Dervis bluſhed a little—Juliet continued thus,

Suſan's circumſtances (this was the name of my nurſe) were ſo much bettered by my mother's preſents, that all her family were very happy. As my father uniformly ſpent ſome months every ſummer at Verval, I had the annual pleaſure of ſeeing Suſan run to embrace me when we arrived. I viſited her village alſo to ſee her and family, and experienced the moſt ſincere and heart-felt ſatisfaction to find *peace* and *plenty*, reſidenters at her homely but happy dwelling.

When my father's health began to decline, and it was found neceſſary to viſit Spa, we were one year

year prevented from paying the cuſtomary viſit to Verval. The following year we went there as uſual. We intended that this journey ſhould be a kind of feſtival to celebrate my father's recovery to uſual health. Suſan came out to meet me as uſual, and although a certain melancholy ſeemed preying upon her, ſhe appeared no leſs awake to the joy of our happy return; but as ſhe took leave, when I mentioned to her my intention of paying her a viſit ſhortly, ſhe intreated me not to take that trouble, and ſpoke in a very unhappy and affected manner. This manner of ſpeaking was new to me, and I inſiſted upon being informed of the reaſon accordingly; ſhe took me in her arms, with a ſmile in her countenance, and at ſame time a mixture of chagrin; "Miſs Juliet," ſaid ſhe, "you are paſt childhood, and your attention to me"——"I am always the ſame to you, and in every period of my life," continued I, "you will find me the ſame Juliet you nurſed. I am determined to call upon you with all ſpeed."

A becoming pride, and an exalted mind are virtues inherited from nature. Suſan had been unlucky. An excellent old man, who had lived with them, (Firmin), her huſband's (Baptiſt) father had died, ſometime before, and his laſt diſtreſs had ruined

ruined them: a thatched hut was now their reſidence inſtead of their ſnug little houſe; inſtead of their fine black cow, they had only a goat; a vineyard for a meadow; which with a bare, naked ſpot of ground, inſtead of a garden, was all that now remained of their former ſubſtance. All was changed with them during the laſt eighteen months. When Suſan ſaw me arrive, ſhe came out to meet me, and addreſſed me in the following manner, with that noble air which was peculiar to her—— "You will rather feel vexed to find us ſo different from what we once were; but do not repent your bounty to us, and the purpoſes to which you applied your parents bounty; it was well employed. Our worthy parent, Firmin, was as well cared for, as though his children had been more wealthy, and thank God, wanted nothing till his laſt moment.

As I looked round the hut, I could not repreſs the tears; I ſaw every thing clean and in order, but a very poorly furniſhed houſe indeed. "How could you, Suſan," ſaid I, "let us continue ſtrangers to your ſituation? Did you imagine we would *forſake you in your time of need?*"—"*I again aſſure* you," replied ſhe, "the ſick man wanted nothing that could be uſeful to him."——"But you, Suſan, your little ones, and their unlucky father."———

"No,

"No, no, my dear Juliet, their father has not been unlucky; Marcellin, your foſter brother helped him. They labour together in good health and ſpirits in a wealthy neighbour's vineyard. My little daughter, Louiſa, is now alſo become uſeful to us; ſhe ſpins cotton or wool on the the little wheel of which you made her a preſent; the ſtuff doubles its value among her fingers, and one thing with another, when Saturday comes round, we make both ends of the week anſwer. Be not then led to pity us, but reſt aſſured, that if our labours had not ſufficed, Madame de Verval, and you her amiable daughter, are the firſt, that ſhould have been made acquainted with our ſituation."

"Juſt at this inſtant, Louiſa came into the houſe, carrying on her head a baſket of linens ſhe was bringing from the water; ſhe very kindly made up to me, with a pleaſed countenance, complimented me very ſweetly, and ſeemed to be quite as compoſed as uſual. "Louiſa, my dear," ſaid her mother, "ſtep out and milk the goat; Miſs Juliet muſt taſte her milk." *Milk the goat*, were words which went to my heart, but they made no body elſe unhappy. Louiſa ran to do as ſhe was deſired, and ſhe ſeemed doubly active, ſhe was ſo pleaſed to ſee

me again. "You will find our bread to be very good," ſaid Suſan, "I bake it myſelf."

"I eat a little of the bread—it was very good, as was alſo the milk; but I found a very bitter ingredient in the morſel. I took care, that they however, ſhould remain ignorant of what I felt at the diſtreſs in which I had ſeen them. How comfortleſs is their ſituation, ſaid I to myſelf, as I left them, to wait every day for daily bread, till it is procured by labour! and ſhould any one of them fall ſick!—Surely, you will never permit them, my dear mother, to continue in this wretched ſituation any longer.—She indeed loſt no time in ſending them aſſiſtance; but what were they to do hereafter, when we were gone, all theſe matters ſtrongly impreſſed my mind, and diſtreſſed me in my dreams. I had one dream however, which ſeemed to preſage ſomething ſo favourable, that had I had any confidence in dreams, my concern about them would certainly have been alleviated.

"There is a corner, you know, in Verval park, which projects in an irregular manner from the bottom of the hill, and from it, the ſtream which waters our garden, falls. This ſtream, which forms a pretty caſcade in its fall, and which conſtantly boiling

boiling up, meanders through this corner, and makes this ſolitary little place a delightful retreat for any one diſpoſed to private meditation. On this ſpot, one appears to be quite alone in the world, and nothing is to be heard, but the murmuring ſtream, prattling to its banks, a ſound which has always been conſidered as friendly to ſtudy. My father delighted in this place; it was here he generally walked, and he had concealed the approach to it, by ſerpentine walks. Thither I often reſorted with my governeſs, to ruminate on the ſad hut in which I had left Suſan. I mentioned the matter to my governeſs, and conſulted her upon a plan I meditated for their relief, but as ſhe was rather of a ſevere temper, while ſhe commended my gratitude, ſhe diſſuaded me from proſecuting my deſign. She told me, "that my parents had ſhewn more kindneſs towards Suſan, than any perſon had ever done towards a woman in the ſame ſituation; to ſolicit more from them might be conſidered as importuning them too much. I ſhould probably," ſaid ſhe, "be able to add my own bounty, to the favour my parents had already ſhewn to Suſan's family; till that period ſhould arrive, there had been enough done."—My governeſs judged right, but what ſhe ſaid only contributed to increaſe my

melancholy, of which I could not now venture to hint at the cauſe.

The converſation turning accidentally one evening upon dreams, I felt an irreſiſtible inclination to relate a dream I had the preceding night; I did ſo, and my father liſtened to me with the utmoſt attention; he was always pleaſed to ſee us employ the natural talent of repreſenting, as ſtrikingly as poſſible, any impreſſions we felt.

"My favourite walk, as well as yours, papa," ſaid I, "is the caſcade valley. My imagination preſented that delightful ſpot to my view, laſt night, but totally altered. There was now a mill erected at the bottom of the caſcade. The ſtream was quite in a milk white foam, boiling up and ſmoking below the wheel, which appeared to animate and inſpire it as it were with the inclination to be uſeful. In ſhort, the ſtream looked as if pleaſed and proud to turn a mill. Pray, who was the miller's wife, think you?—"Suſan," ſaid my mother: "ſhe was," I replied, "and who was miller but Baptiſt. Marcellin was employed in planting a vineyard on the hill ſide, and Louiſa was dreſſing the neateſt and ſweeteſt garden on earth; two excellent young cows, and a ſmall flock of ſheep were grazing in the park about the

the mill.—What a happy little family, papa, this was!—how happy did I feel myſelf!

After a ſhort pauſe, my father ſmiled, and ſaid, "I am pleaſed, Juliet, you have had ſo pleaſant a dream; and you have told it vaſtly well indeed."

While I afterwards ſauntered through the caſcade valley, I frequently recollected my dream, but never ſpoke of it again—it ſeemed to be quite forgotten.

We returned again to town, about the end of next autumn. In courſe of the winter, which appeared to me a very long one, I carefully ſcraped together all my pocket money, and waited with anxiety for the time I ſhould ſee my nurſe again. The day after we reviſited Verval (25th April) was one of the fineſt ſpring days you can conceive. It was ſuch a day as *Vernet* would have ſelected to have painted nature's revival in her moſt brilliant colours. The whole company at Verval enjoyed the beauty of the country. I was the only melancholy perſon in the company. Suſan generally came out to meet us on our arrival; ſhe had not done ſo this ſeaſon. Could it be owing to her own ſickneſs, her huſband's, or any of the children? Could it be the effect of her poverty? perhaps ſhe

feared that her appearing before us, might look like importunity.

My father propoſed walking after we had breakfaſted. My mother, the vicar, ſeveral neighbours and friends, among whom was the Baron de Driſſac, —(" Yes, I was of the party," ſaid the Baron) and I myſelf accompanied them. Having paſſed through the garden and the grove, we came to the ſolitary *Corner*, the caſcade valley. Judge my ſurpriſe, or rather enchantment! My father had actually realiſed my Dream. *The Mill*, vineyard, garden, flock of ſheep, preſented themſelves before me, exactly as they had done in my dream. But the moſt intereſting part was deficient, till I beheld Baptiſt, now *The Miller*, Suſan, his wife, and her two children, come from their new little dwelling—Who can

paint my tranſports and joy!

I proſtrated myſelf to my father, and embraced his knees with ſuch tenderneſs, as affected all around us.

My father raiſed me with a ſmile—" You ſhould embrace the miller's wife," ſaid he;—I ran to her arms—her gratitude ſhe expreſſed in a manner anſwerable to my joy.

We

We entered their houſe, where nothing was wanting to complete ruſtic enjoyment. My father had provided every thing in plenty. The worthy old vicar, with his ſilver locks, overpowered him with bleſſings; while all our friends, equally affected with me, were filled with admiration at my father's ingenuity of Benevolence.

"Are you acquainted with the cauſe of our wonder," ſaid my father, as we left the mill; "it is the ſimpleſt and leaſt expenſive thing you can conceive. The water of this caſcade was laviſhed (as my daughter's dream very properly repreſented) without uſe or purpoſe: it is now an uſeful caſcade. *The Mill* it turns is convenient to all the ſurrounding country; this poor family is enriched; I thus cancel a debt I owe them; the landſcape of my park is improved; and my income is increaſed. This conduct then, you may extol as you think fit; but truſt me, my friends, the higheſt delight the country can beſtow, and what chiefly attaches me to it, is,

The Eaſe with which GREAT GOOD *may be done at a* SMALL EXPENCE.

THE

THE GOOD VICAR.

TALE FOURTH.

"I Was made happy myſelf," ſaid Olympia, "and that at a very trifling expence, all that ſummer my daughter alludes to, which was, alas! the laſt which her father ſpent in the place he ſo much delighted in."

A few minutes of univerſal ſilence followed theſe words, and occaſioned a general ſorrow on the countenances of all preſent. Olympia ſoon perceived it, and anxious to remove it, ſhe immediately proceeded as follows:

Juliet mentioned to you, that Sufan had two children; Marcellin who was one of the ſprightlieſt youths in the village, and Louiſa, his eldeſt ſiſter. She was a beautiful girl; but was particularly remarkable, for an air of truth and innocence which betokened the purity of her mind. She had ſuch a look as a painter would give to *Ingenuouſneſs*. It was eaſily obſervable that Louiſa was a ſtranger to diſſimulation. Her happy diſpoſition was untarniſhed by deceit; and Truth, ſeemed to ſit perching on her

her lips, waiting only her breath to permit it to eſcape. I conſider this to be the moſt touching kind of beauty; and indeed, whenever Louiſa appeared in the village of Verval ſhe made many conqueſts.

I generally gave a dance on Sunday, in the country and before our caſtle; and here, while Louiſa appeared in the midſt of the young people, who were attracted by the muſic, ſhe had every eye fixed upon her, without knowing it herſelf. Such was her amiable modeſty, that her rivals themſelves excuſed her for eclipſing them; envy is not on all occaſions that unjuſt paſſion we ſuppoſe it to be; Envy is moſt commonly hurt, when the accompliſhments of another are diſplayed with oſtentation. So far was Louiſa from employing her's to the humiliation of her neighbours, that ſhe appeared even to forget that ſhe herſelf was in the company, and to conſider as paid to another, that homage which was meant for her. Indeed, this kind of homage ſhe valued very little; I have often ſeen her encompaſſed by twenty rivals, all of them timidly anxious to pay their reſpects to her, and one of them only would ſometimes obtain a ſmile, or a ſweetly prolonged look. This diſtinguiſhed youth was Henry, the eldeſt ſon of Vincent, my tenant; he was himſelf a pattern to all the youths in the village, of ſuch

ſuch virtues as ſuited his line of life; of theſe he had an exalted idea. Sometimes I had obſerved him at work, he ſeemed proud of holding the plough. One would be ready to think he commanded the ground to be fruitful; and when he came riding home on his waggon loaded with ſheaves, with his erected head and exulting look, he looked like a prince on the *Throne of Plenty*. M. de Verval had a great opinion of him, and often congratulated his father, in having ſuch a ſon. —"Vincent," would he ſay, "you are an honeſt man, and an excellent farmer, but your ſon is quite your equal in every reſpect." Such eulogiums generally coſt Henry a bluſh, but he ſoon recovered and looked up again. Such was the lover of Louiſa.

Jealouſy and ill-will have very ſharp eyes in the country as well as the town. Report ſoon whiſpered, that Louiſa had fixed the man of her choice in her heart, and that Henry was the happy *He*. I heard of this and ſent for Louiſa.

"I am informed, my good girl," ſaid I, "that your modeſty, happy temper, and conſtant attention to your parents endear you to all the village, ſo that every mother in it, wiſhes to have you for a daughter-in-law."—They are very obliging, to ſpare a thought

a thought on me, anſwered ſhe, "but pray Louiſa, are you not diſpoſed to make ſome one or other of theſe mothers happy?"—After my own mother, madam, the worthy Auguſtina, your tenant Vincent's wife, is ſhe in whoſe welfare I feel moſt intereſted; ſhe is very kind to me.—"I am happy to hear it;—and Vincent,"—O, madam, what an excellent man that is!—"They have alſo a daughter about your age, I think?"—Yes, madam, Cecilia is her name, ſhe is my moſt intimate companion.—"I am told, ſhe has a brother too, who is a very worthy young man?" He is indeed madam, a very worthy young man truly; (during this part of the converſation two very beautiful roſes bluſhed on her cheeks) "I have heard it hinted, Louiſa, that he is very partial to you;" I believe he is, madam. "And at your time of life, Louiſa, ſo much eſteem for a young man muſt border very cloſely on love;"—It cannot be far from it, to be ſure, madam; and whenever our parents ſhall conſider it proper time, we are each of us very much inclined to love one another. "Do your parents know your ſentiments upon this head?" They certainly do, madam, I mentioned it to my mother. I make it a point to conceal nothing from her; and he told his father what he thought, the very third time we happened

to

to dance in the caſtle yard! "Father," ſaid he, "throwing his arms around his neck, obſerve that there little girl, if you ever have a daughter-in-law, that is ſhe." The worthy father looked at me ſmiling, and replied, "there is no hurry yet, ſtay a few harveſts more, and we muſt ſee about it." "What thinks your mother of it?" She imagines I am not rich enough as farmer Vincent will look for a fortune for his ſon." "But I think you ſay that Henry declares he will marry none elſe but you:" True, madam, but if his father commands, he muſt obey—nay, I myſelf will urge him to do ſo. If my father and mother choſe to diſpoſe of me, would not I obey them?

This dialogue you may well ſuppoſe ſatisfied me much; I repeated it to M. de Verval. "Truſt the conducting of this buſineſs to me," ſaid he, "I ſhall ſpeak to Baptiſt firſt." He went directly to his mill. "Miller," ſaid he, "do you know that your daughter and farmer Vincent's ſon have a ſneaking kindneſs for each other?"—"I know," ſaid Baptiſt, "they have that ſort of eſteem for each other which our Vicar would ſoon convert into love. I ſaid ſo to Vincent, but he ſaid, that love, in people of their years would keep a while, without turning ſtale; nay, a few years, ſo far from

ſpoiling

ſpoiling, would only ripen it, and make it more durable. The fact, ſir, I apprehend to be, that Vincent wiſhes to have a renewal of his leaſe, before he ſuffers his ſon to marry. He obſerves the rents riſing all round the country, and that very conſiderably, and he dreads you intend to raiſe *his farm* to him. There are not people, who do wiſh him well, and would not heſitate to over bid *him*; *this* vexes him."—"Vincent, ought to have known by this time, that he has not a Jew to deal with."—Next day he was convinced he had not.——

"Well, Vincent," ſaid M. de Verval, "have you a promiſing crop this ſeaſon?"—"It has a tolerable appearance juſt now, but it is very deceitful often! Juſt on the eve of a noble harveſt, we have a ſtorm, or a ſhower of hail, and every thing is laid waſte. Very often the induſtrious farmer, after infinite labour, reaps but very trifling benefit indeed."—"However this may be, Vincent, rents are getting higher and higher every day, and I expect in renewing your leaſe."——"Alas, ſir, I beſeech you ſpare us, you are ſo juſt and beneficent! One worthy family is juſt now enriched by you, do not ruin mine, we have conſtantly ſerved you with all poſſible fidelity;"——"It is Baptiſt, the miller, you allude to," ſaid M. de Verval, "and

that reminds me, I hear his daughter and your ſon are very fond of one another."—" Very true, ſir," replied Vincent, " but how cruel would it be to expoſe our children to the hardſhip of becoming parents themſelves, while we have nothing certain to give them."—" You ſpeak like a good father, and a prudent man," ſaid my huſband. " But, farmer, were you aſſured of a freſh nine year's leaſe of the farm you preſently enjoy, and that at the ſame rent you preſently pay; and of a ſecond nine years, by way of portion to Louiſa, ſtill on the ſame terms."—" Generous man!" exclaimed Vincent in tranſport, " diſpoſe of my ſon as you think beſt.—Let us ſign the marriage articles and the leaſe at ſame time."

When the Count returned, " I have ſettled every thing," ſaid he to me. " Both fathers have given me their promiſe; and their promiſes I have procured by doing only what I intended to have done at any rate. I ſurely never meant to load my farmer with my avarice in addition to that of the ground, which parts with its increaſe on ſuch high terms to the laborious huſbandman. But as they conſider it a favour to be permitted to remain in eaſy circumſtances, I thought Louiſa ought to partake

take with them, and by thus making two people happy, improve my farm."

Juliet inſtantly ſet out with the pleaſing intelligence to her nurſe and family; but Vincent had been before her. She found both families met together at the mill; the lovers ſtanding gazing fondly on each other, with the tears of tender rapture in their eyes. The fathers cordially ſhaking hands; the mothers ſaluting each other, while poor Marcellin ſat alone in a corner, melancholy and thoughtful, eyeing Cecilia by ſtealth, whoſe head reclined on the ſhoulder of Louiſa, as if afraid to caſt her eye towards Marcellin.

This picture ſtruck my daughter much, and ſhe deſcribed it to me upon her return. "We have thus another marriage to make up," ſaid I, "but there is no reaſon to be in ſuch a hurry with it, as Marcellin is only ſeventeen years of age."

Suſan came next day to throw herſelf at my feet, and after the firſt effuſions of gratitude were over, ſhe ſaid to me; "Could you poſſibly ſuppoſe, Madam, that notwithſtanding the greatneſs of my happineſs at this moment, it is not devoid of pain. Marcellin, that young dog, is vexed that his ſiſter

ſhould get married before him—he ſays, that if to be in love is the only requiſite, he is a thouſand times more deeply ſmitten with Cecilia, Henry's ſiſter, than Henry is with Louiſa. I laughed at him at firſt, but he aſſured me, that inſtead of laughing, I ought to weep, when I ſaw Marcellin in ſuch diſtreſs, who loved his father and mother ſo tenderly—ſo burſting into tears, he ſet off to his work."—"We muſt comfort him, Suſan," ſaid I, "ſend him to morrow morning with my cream."

He came with it accordingly, but ſo dejected and wan, that I ſhould ſcarcely have recollected him again.—"Can it poſſibly be you, Marcellin?" ſaid I, "I am happy to ſee you; but methinks, you have not the pleaſant contented countenance you uſe to have."—"No indeed, Madam, there is no more chearfulneſs now for me. They rejoice to ſee me dull, but that is no fault of mine; I wiſh to be chearful as much as any one can."—"Who is it, Marcellin, that diſtreſſes you?"—"Why the truth, d'ye ſee, Madam, is this; my ſiſter Louiſa, is juſt about to be married, and every body tries to make her happy; while I, who am your daughter Miſs Juliet's own foſter brother, am neglected, forgotten, and quite overlooked—Is it not a hard thing, Madam, for me to ſee my ſiſter rob me of the kindneſs

of

of you all?"—"By no means, Marcellin, you ſhall not be forgotten, but you are very young yet, you know."——"True, Madam, I am young, and ſo they conſtantly tell me, but is it neceſſary to be old before one can get married?—You know, Madam, I am full nine months older than Miſs Juliet; and if you would be good enough to aſk every body that knows and ſees me, whether I do not work for a man in the vineyard, or at the mill, and that from morning to night. No body would take me for a child, when I handle the ſpade or hoe, or when I lift up a ſack of flour, as it were a feather."——"I know very well that you are a hard worker, and very uſeful to your father."——"My father, Madam, why I'll take upon me to ſay, ſet my mind at reſt, and he may very ſoon give up work; did you but know how ſorrow carries off our ſtrength! and if I once loſe my health and ſpirits, who will my father get to aſſiſt him? and my poor mother too! only think, Madam, when Louiſa leaves the houſe, ſhe will be left quite alone, and muſt ſlave in it by herſelf. Now, had ſhe a young ſtout daughter-in-law, who would be as a daughter to her, ſhe would only have to give orders; Cecilia, do you look after the ſheep; Cecilia, gather ſome lettuce; Cecilia, go carry the cream and milk to the caſtle; do this, and then t'other thing, firſt

one thing, then another, while Cecilia, ever kind, would be at all times ready to aſſiſt and obey her! Again, when I came home from my labour, I would ſoon forget my fatigues, finding an agreeable wife at home ready to receive me. "Come," would ſhe ſay, "come, my dear and reſt yourſelf beſide me." What happineſs! How different from my preſent ſituation!—the very idea of it makes my heart rejoice."——"And it is Cecilia, Vincent's daughter, you propoſe to give your mother as a daughter?" "Surely it is, Madam, who could it be elſe?"—— "I never had acceſs to hear before of your having been fond of Cecilia."——"That, Madam, I well know; there is nobody thinks of me, or ſpeaks of my concerns."—"Perhaps you kept it ſecret."—— "That I did not, I proclaimed it to all the village." —"And does Cecilia entertain *the ſame* partiality for you?"——"I cannot juſt ſay, *the ſame*, but I flatter myſelf it is at leaſt beginning with her. In the firſt place, every time ſhe ſees me paſs by the farm-yard, ſhe gives me a little friendly nod,—— "Where are you going, Marcellin? where do you come from?"——You will needs ſuppoſe, Madam, that ſhe does not beſtow this favour on every body. And then the name of Marcellin has ſo ſoft and ſweet a ſound in her mouth! you would ſay that her lips took a pleaſure in pronouncing it. Oh! if love

be

be not come on her as yet, I am ſure it is not far off. Beſides, that's my buſineſs. Let her but be mine, and leave the reſt to me. I love her ſo much, that it would be hard if I ſhould not make her love me." ——" But, Marcellin, Cecilia is two years older than you."—" So much the better, Madam, ſhe will be the more prudent, and if I be not enough ſo, ſhe will have prudence enough for both."—— " Her father will not eaſily conſent to her taking ſo young a huſband."—" Yes, that's what my mother ſays. But if his Honour pleaſes, three words would be enough. Look you, Madam, if I was in his place, I would ſend for the two fathers, and I would ſay to my miller:—" Baptiſt, are you ſatisfied with your ſon Marcellin?"—" Yes, your Honour," would my father ſay: " the boy promiſes to turn out well: he works with a good will, has no vices; knows his duty to his parents, and what a man's duty is to his wife and children: the boy would not make a bad huſband."—" And you, Vincent," I would ſay, " don't you think of ſoon marrying your daughter? Here's a ſon-in-law ready at hand for you: truck for truck, the boys and the girls, nothing can be fairer; and the two marriages will make but one wedding. What ſay you?"—" Ah! your honour, Marcellin is very young."—— " Never mind the envious and Jealous; youth is not a vice. Marcellin

cellin is an honeſt lad; he is laborious, and that's what's wanted for houſekeeping. Hark'ee, Vincent, if you like, I'll do the ſame for him I did for Henry; I will grant a leaſe for Baptiſt's and his ſon's life of the little eſtate of the caſcade, and your daughter will be as ſnug as can be, and the mill will be peopled *with a brood of little millers.*"—"*Why, Madam*; I would lay a bett that both the father's *would conſent and thank his Honour.*"—"*You* plead your cauſe excellently," ſaid I, Go, and reſt *ſatisfied, that I ſhall ſay what I can in your behalf.*"

I mentioned this converſation to M. de Verval, he approved of what Marcellin ſaid; "the leaſe for *life is exactly what I purpoſed*; and *I intend that* the mill ſhall deſcend as an inheritance from father to ſon. This will be a very eaſy way for us to make two people happy: it will coſt me nothing but the wedding dinner. You, Madam, will pleaſe to provide wedding cloths for the brides; and you, my daughter, when your mother chuſes thoſe of Cecilia, recollect that Marcellin was weaned when only nine months."

The following day the leaſe was ſigned, but the celebration of the marriage was deferred for a few days, for a reaſon, that was kept ſecret from all of us.

Here

Here the Vicar of the village, who was preſent, wanted to retire; but Olympia prevented him, and continued her ſtory.

The two brothers and the two ſiſters were united at the ſame altar, and at the ſame hour. The wedding was in common. The dinner was dreſſed at the Caſtle; we invited the whole village; and the ſpectacle of the happineſs of the two bridegrooms and the two families was the leaſt affecting part of the ſcene.

The good old Vicar had juſt pronounced the nuptial bleſſing: he ſat between the two mothers; their daughters were next to them, and oppolite were the two bridegrooms each by the ſide of his father. As ſoon as every body had taken their places, and we had drawn round the hall table, (for the company was numerous) Vincent got up with ruſtic dignity which commanded reſpect, and ſpoke as follows:

"This happy day, my friends, which two good fathers have choſen to unite their children, is not only a feſtival for the two families, but for the whole village; it is a feſtival for us all. It is now fifty years ſince our good paſtor, this venerable man, our friend, the friend of our fathers, who has ſeen us almoſt

almoſt all born, and who has ſince watched over us like a good and faithful ſhepherd; it is now fifty years ſince he came to take charge of his flock; and in the ſpace of ſo many years he has not let a day paſs without doing good. Arbitrator and conciliator of all the differences of the pariſh, and of each family, he has appeaſed a thouſand diſputes, and excited none: he has put a ſtop to a thouſand law ſuits, and never had one in his life: the unfortunate never had a more tender friend to conſole, nor the poor a better father to relieve them. In ſhort, it is now fifty years that his leſſons and his examples teach us to live like friends and honeſt men. It is his love for us; it is our love for him, it is this kind of religious and holy alliance, which is renewed to-day; it is to the wedding of the pariſh that you are united. May it draw down the bleſſing of heaven upon our children's nuptials.

It is impoſſible to expreſs to you how much the whole village and we ourſelves were affected at this ſpeech. Let him if poſſible live fifty years longer, exclaimed they: the holy man, the worthy and honeſt paſtor, who never did any thing but good.—

"Ah, Madam! ſtop, I beſeech you;" ſaid he. —"No, I will tell all. More affected himſelf than

you

you ſee him at preſent, (for this is only a remembrance) the good old man was loſt as it were in the expreſſion of his humble gratitude. He covered his face with both his hands, and torrents of tears ſtreamed from his eyes. From time to time he looked up to heaven, either to offer up a tribute of praiſe, or to recommend his children to its protection.

What can I ſay in ſhort? this unlooked for incident took ſuch ſtrong hold on every mind, that the new married couple forgot themſelves. The fathers and mothers thought no longer of their children. Suſan looked now and then at *Louiſa*; but it was to remark her ſenſibility at the triumph of virtue. As to me my emotions were ſo ſtrong, that I do not think I ever experienced in my life a moment of more lively or more delightful happineſs; and if the violins had not brought back gaiety and awakened mirth, every one would have retired weeping from the wedding. But the Vicar was the firſt to drink the health of the brides and bridegrooms, and of the fathers and mothers; nor did he forget ours. Singing ſtill more animated and enlivened the ſcene, and the revolution was completely effected by our riſing from table to a cheerful dance.

THE

THE DOG.

TALE FIFTH.

WHENEVER Olympia had finiſhed: "Ariſtus," ſaid ſhe, to one of her old acquaintances, "it is your turn now to fill the ſcene," Ariſtus ſpoke in theſe terms:

"The inſtances you have given of the eaſe with which we make thoſe about us happy, when we reſide in the country, make me recollect that I once enjoyed the pleaſures of beneficence at ſo cheap a rate, that I bluſh ſtill at its coſting me ſo little.

"I was in a village, at the houſe of an amiable woman, who was uncommonly beautiful, though rather paſt her prime, and whoſe unaffected politeneſs attracted ſociety like a magnet. The neighbourhood of Clarenton often made the bridge acroſs the Marne the limits of our walks. There while reſting ourſelves we turned our eyes upon the various and changing picture of a high-road continually animated.

"This rapid circulation of movements, all directed by ſelf-intereſt towards the general end of common utility; this perpetual exchange of labour and good

good offices, made us admire in the organization of civil ſociety, the wondrous works of neceſſity. What an induſtrious coincidence of the innumerable wheels that compoſe the immenſe machine! what is the invincible connection that unites them? and what is the ſpring that animates them all, and puts them in motion? one alone, reciprocal want. The moral view of nature is like the phyſical one: aſtoniſhment ever follows meditation. In one a leaf, a blade of graſs, becomes a prodigy when attentively obſerved; in the other, the huſbandman driving his plough, the ſeaman on the deck of his veſſel, and the waggoner carrying to town the productions of his country, are aſtoniſhing men, when conſidered as eſſential parts of ſocial mechaniſm, and when in this ſyſtem we ſee all the agents of the common ſubſiſtence, united, and put in motion by the ſame law, attraction."

I here give you a ſpecimen of our converſations, that you may not take us for ſilly loiterers on the champaign road, employed about nothing, and whiling away our time with empty heads and vacant minds.

One evening when we were ſitting at the foot of the bridge, a man of the lower order of people

with grey hair, and a lame leg, and hardly able to get on with the help of a ſtick, paſſed before us, followed by a young water ſpaniel, and ſaid to the women in whoſe company I was:—"*Ladies will you buy my dog?*"—As each of them had her own, and as his was not of the kind women are fond of, they anſwered they did not want one.

Then coming up to me, he ſaid in a more preſſing tone of intreaty:—"*Do, Sir, buy my dog?*"—"I would have bought it inſtantly," ſaid Juliet.—This amiable *movement ought, I muſt confeſs, Miſs, to have* preceded reflection; but kindneſs is not ſo active a ſentiment in every heart as it is in yours. My firſt word was a refuſal, ſoftened however by all the reſpect due to the unfortunate.

The old man ſtood for a moment motionleſs before me; he caſt on me a look of ſadneſs, and left me diſcontentented with myſelf.

As he walked ſlowly up the bridge, I had time to diſcover the cauſe of the confuſed reproach conveyed by his eyes, and repeated by my own heart. At the very ſame inſtant I recollected that my friend the Count de C——— had loſt a dog he was very fond of; As I thought that the capacity of a water-

ſpaniel

ſpaniel was not inferior to the ſagacity of the Siberian dog my friend had loſt, I determined he ſhould have it, and called back the old man.

"What do you aſk for your dog?" ſaid I.——"What you pleaſe," ſaid he. Here, Miſs, it would be eaſy to make myſelf appear liberal, by embelliſhing the truth; but I rather chuſe to confeſs that I was not very generous. I was not rich, and a piece of ſix livers was all I had about me at that moment. I offered it to him; he accepted it without any marks of repugnance, and *ſaid when he received it:* "The dog is yours."—"But," ſaid I, "he will get away; I have no ſtring to lead him by."—"It is however neceſſary to have one," ſaid he, "for otherwiſe he would follow me."——Then undoing his garter, he called his dog, took it his arms, and ſet it upon the balluſtrade of the bridge.—"You make me ſhudder," ſaid Juliet, "it fell into the water."—"Don't be afraid, Miſs, the dog did not fall; it let its maſter put his garter round its neck, and I perceived that while tying it, the old man's hands trembled. This I attributed to age, for his countenance, which I obſerved attentively, did not change. But when he had tied the knot, I ſaw him let his head fall upon his dog, and hiding his forehead in its rough hair, and with his mouth glewed to its body,

he hung over it for ſome minutes mute and motionleſs.

I ſtepped up to him.——"What is the matter, friend?" ſaid I. "Nothing," ſaid he, lifting up his head; "it will ſoon be over."—And I ſaw his face all bathed in tears—"You ſeem to feel a great deal of regret at parting with your dog?"—"Alas! yes, he is the only friend I had in the world. We never were aſunder. It was he who guarded me when I was aſleep on the road; and when he ſaw me ſuffering and forſaken, the poor beaſt pitied me, and comforted me with his careſſes. He loved me ſo much, that I can do no leſs than love him. But all this ſignifies nothing, Sir, the dog is yours."—And then gave me the end of the garter he had tied round its neck.——"You muſt ſuppoſe me to be very cruel, if you think me capable of depriving you of a faithful friend, and of the only one you have in the world."—He did not inſiſt any longer; but he wanted to return me the miſerable crown. I told him to keep the crown and the dog, and at laſt got the better of his reſiſtance. Then I ſaw his knees bend.——"Oh! Sir, I owe you my life. It is hunger that has reduced me to this cruel extremity."

From

From that moment, you will needs think that he had two friends inſtead of one. I deſired to know who he was, whence he came, and whither he was going, and what had brought him to ſuch a ſtate of infirmity.

"Thank heaven," ſaid he, "I lived fifty years by the *ſweat of my brow*, and yeſterday for the firſt time, I ſuffered the humiliation of aſking charity. I was a carpenter in Lorrain, and my trade gave me bread; but an accident diſabled me from ſtanding up to work: a ſplinter of wood occaſioned an incurable ſore in my leg. I am going to Rouen to ſee my daughter; ſhe is an excellent ſpinner and earns her livelihood in the cotton manufactories. When with her, I ſhall want for nothing. But as I got on ſlowly on account of my ſore leg, and come from far, the little money I had amaſſed was not ſufficient for my journey. I have been obliged to ſolicit alms; but as I do not look like a pauper, I met with little relief. I was faſting; my dog remained——." Theſe words ſtifled his voice.

"At your age, in the heat of ſummer, and with a ſore leg, I will never ſuffer you," ſaid I, "to undertake a journey of thirty leagues by land, twice as much if you go by water: it would aggravate

your diſeaſe, and render it incurable, if it be not ſo already. Come with me. Providence offers you here an aſylum, where you will find reſt, remedies, and perhaps a cure." The old man, who looked at me with joyful aſtoniſhment, untied his dog, and let me conduct him to the hoſpital on the other ſide of the bridge.

I was not known there; but in theſe reſpectable houſes, indigence and infirmity recommend themſelves. The prior liſtened with emotion to the recital of our adventure, ſent for the moſt ſkilful ſurgeon in the hoſpital, and made him examine the ſore. I ſhuddered at ſeeing to what a degree it was envenomed by the ſummer heats, and the fatigue of the journey.——"There is no time to be loſt," ſaid the ſurgeon; "but it is not too late, and I will undertake to ſave the leg."——"He will be cured then?"—"Yes, Sir, I anſwer for it."—This was the moment of my joy and happineſs.—"Gentlemen," ſaid I, "ſpare nothing; I will do every thing that may be neceſſary."—"All that is neceſſary," ſaid the prior with a look of modeſt ſeverity, "is to leave the ſick man to us, and to confide in our care."

I felt that I had injured the delicacy of the good father, and made him an apology.—"But would it not,"

not," ſaid I, "be impoſing upon your goodneſs, if I requeſted that his faithful friend....."——"Yes, Sir, his friend, his dog ſhall bear him company: we alſo know how to value the inſtinct of friendſhip."

Thoſe words of the reverend father, this reception, this ready care, this tranquil piety, this ſerviceable humanity, this habit of doing good at every hour and at every moment, without ſeeming to be conſcious of any merit, made a deep impreſſion upon me. What, ſaid I to myſelf, for my pitiful crown, and a few ſteps in the ſervice of an unfortunate man, I am tranſported with joy, and contented with myſelf beyond meaſure! and theſe *religious*, who paſs their days and nights in nurſing, attending, and relieving the poor, and who do more good in a day, than I ſhall ever do in my life, do not even deign to think of it. This indeed is meritorious and ſublime.

Before I left the old man, I took his daughter's addreſs, that I might ſend her an account of her father, and went to join the ladies, who were waiting for me on the other ſide of the bridge. I could not avoid telling them what had paſſed; and my ſorry preſent mingled a little ridicule with the *pathos* of my recital; but I defied them to be more generous,

generous, and told them that till the old man ſhould be cured, I was his treaſurer.

Our ſociety in the country often changed, and whenever a new face arrived, I was deſired to repeat my tale. I never failed to mention the offer of my crown, and this exceſs of liberality never failed to draw upon me ironical admiration.—" A crown," ſaid they, " a crown to the good old man for ſo invaluable a dog!"—" And you, Sir," ſaid I, " and you, Madam, how much would you have given?—Every one named a ſmaller or greater ſum, according as his ſenſibility had been worked upon by my narrative.—" Well!" ſaid I, " the old man is not far off, and every one may do what he would have done in my place. They vied with one another in generoſity, and I for my ſhare, thanked heaven for having given me, inſtead of riches, the talent of moving the rich. At length I announced the wiſhed for day when my old man would come with his dog to return thanks to his benefactors. The houſe was full. I went to the hoſpital to fetch him; and after having expreſſed my heartfelt gratitude to the good fathers, and my veneration for ſo ſacred an inſtitution, and for functions ſo pioufly fulfilled, I brought him with me almoſt as active, and as joyous as his ſpaniel.

They

They were both received with joyful exclamations; but the dog was taken the moſt notice of. Never in his life did he receive ſo many careſſes. He was at firſt confuſed, but he ſoon returned them, with a look that ſeemed to ſay, he knew why he was ſo well treated.

The good old man dined with us, and his dog beſide him. They ſlept together, and the following morning, at the dawn of day, came to take leave of me. The honeſt man's little treaſure was delivered to him. I told him in vain that I had contributed but little.—"I am indebted to you for all," ſaid he, "and I will never forget it." On ſaying theſe words he wanted to throw himſelf at my feet; but I held him up, and, finding ourſelves in one another's arms, we took leave as affectionately as two old friends would have done.

"Sir," ſaid he, "I am going away, loaded with your favours; but will you permit me to beg one more?—You have embraced me; pray deign to kiſs my dog. I wiſh to tell my daughter that you kiſſed my dog. Come here, Sprightly," ſaid he, "Come, the gentleman will be good enough to do you that honour."—Sprightly ſtood on his hind legs, and I ſtooped towards him, when all at once the

the image of the old man hanging, like me, over his dog, and thinking he was kiſſing him for the laſt time, ruſhed into my mind, and I could not refrain from tears.—" Ah! you neglect him," ſaid the old man, " keep him, he is ſtill your dog,"—" By no means, my good friend, do you go and be happy, for ſo I already am much more than I merited; and the recollection of you and *your dog*, will long ſerve to give me happineſs in idea."

THE GENEROUS NEPHEW.

TALE SIXTH.

" MY happieſt day," ſaid the Vicar, " you have already heard. I muſt therefore endeavour to recollect another, a happy day, though comparatively leſs ſo than the former."

There lives a gentleman in this neighbourhood, a gentleman, who, after having ſerved his king and country with diſtinction, retired to his family, graced by that *honourable reward of bravery*,* which two of his children, as well as he, have already received.——" M. de de l'Orman?" ſaid Olympia.—" *Yes*,

* St Louis' croſs.

"Yes, Madam, the ſame; it is of him that I am about to ſpeak."

His father was as brave and eſtimable as himſelf; but, having ruined himſelf in the ſervice, left him without a fortune. His only hope was therefore the inheritance of an uncle, by whom he was tenderly beloved.

The name of this uncle, a worthy man, but fiery and choleric, as is moſt generally the caſe with good-natured people, was M. de Glancy. He had two brothers, l'Ormon and d'Orambre; one prodigal, and the other avaricious. Each of them left a ſon! l'Ormon, as I have already ſaid, a ſon deſtitute of fortune; d'Orambre a ſon in opulent circumſtances. De Glancy, thinking himſelf more unſociable than he was in reality, though he was a little ſo, it is true, preferred celibacy to a married ſtate, and paſſed his life in the country, in the improvement of his eſtate.

Rich uncles, who have no children of their own, are ſeldom neglected by their nephews; M. de Glancy, however, thought he was by young l'Ormon. He often complained to me, and I tried to keep him in good humour.—"Diſcipline, in time

of

of war, is ſo ſevere," ſaid I, "and ſuch a conſtraint upon youth, that a little liberty, in time of peace, is but a neceſſary compenſation. M. de l'Ormon comes ſeldom to ſee you it is true; but, when he is here, I always remark that he is chearful, contented, and happy in partaking of your kindneſſes; and, indeed, I have often heard him ſpeak of them with the ſincereſt gratitude."

"Fine words," ſaid the uncle; "for my part, I only believe in actions. There is my nephew d'Orambre, he is rich, he does not ſtand in need of my favours, he receives none; and yet with what diligence does he perform, in regard to me, all the duties that l'Ormon neglects!"

"Well, I would lay a wager," ſaid I, "that your heart cannot help, ſometimes, ſpeakiug in favour of l'Ormon."—"No doubt," ſaid he, "becauſe we are more inclined to love thoſe who are in want of our love. But that is what makes him more inexcuſable in my eyes."

"Sir," ſaid I to him one day, when he complained with more bitterneſs than uſual, you will think me a ſingular man; but I never knew how to diſguiſe my way of thinking. God forbid that I

ſhould

ſhould leſſen in your eſteem, the merit of M. d' Orambre's aſſiduity and complaiſance, or throw the ſmalleſt cloud over the ſentiments he profeſſes in your regard; I think them the more praiſe-worthy as they are more diſintereſted; but, if I had a poor nephew, I ſhould not like to ſee him ſo careful to pleaſe: A free, eaſy, and natural behaviour, would baniſh from my thoughts the motives and deſigns of a greedy and vigilant heir. I ſhould wiſh to ſee him depend upon my bounty, and not purſue it with too much ardour. What becomes M. d'Orambre would not be equally fitting in M. de l'Ormon; and, it is my opinion, that he abſtains purpoſely from thoſe marked attentions that you think he neglects. His noble mind feels a repugnance at every thing that looks like adulation; and he rather chuſes, in the ſituation he is in, to merit your good will, by his honourable conduct, than to ſeem to cultivate it with the impatient hope of ſoon reaping the fruits of his aſſiduity."

To all this he made anſwer, that he knew my partiality for M. de l'Orman; that I pleaded his cauſe very ably; but that, unfortunately, the judge was not eaſily to be miſled. I ſaw, however, that I relieved him, by helping him to pardon his nephew. Sometimes he ſported with the complai-

ſance of my morality; and from the indulgence with which I defended young libertines, "he was inclined to believe," he ſaid, "that I had been one myſelf."—He uſed to call me the convenient Doctor; and thus were the clouds of his ill humour diſpelled, from time to time, and his nephew taken again into favour.

One day, when he had invited me to dine with him, I found him more gloomy and ſerious than I had ever ſeen him. I aſked him the reaſon.—— "Let us take our dinner quietly firſt," ſaid he, "and then I will tell you."

The dinner was a ſilent one; and, after it was over, he cloſeted me with him.—"You are going to hear," ſaid he, "with what degree of reſpect I am treated by that nephew whom you have ſo often praiſed and juſtified.—He has been married theſe ſix months, without my knowledge or conſent."—"If it be ſo," ſaid I, "he is highly blameable."—"If it be ſo! Yes, Sir, it is ſo!" ſaid he with a thundering voice, and his eyes ſparkling with anger.—"And how did you learn it?"—"By the deep affliction of his couſin, who concealed from me the cauſe. At laſt I inſiſted, I forced him to obey; and he confeſſed all. L'Ormon is married. He

was

was married ſecretly, but finding himſelf on the eve of becoming a father, he was obliged to take the quality of a huſband."——"It is no doubt a fooliſh match," ſaid I; "but I dare engage he has at leaſt made a choice at which you need not bluſh." —"Oh! no," ſaid he, "quite the contrary; I have reaſon to be proud of it. A Canoneſs, very noble certainly, and without doubt very handſome; but, like himſelf, without a ſhilling in the world; unleſs indeed ſhe have in ſome corner of the earth, an old uncle, deſpiſed and forgotten, who will leave her his fortune."

"This," ſaid I, "is the fatal rock on which the moſt happy diſpoſition, goodneſs, worth itſelf, and all the hopes of youth too often ſplit. Man is weak at every time of life; but how frail when only twenty years of age!"

"Doctor," ſaid he, "I ſee plainly the circuitous road your inſinuating eloquence is taking; but I will ſpeak without diſguiſe. L'Ormon is impudently ungrateful, and I pronounce his name for the laſt time. Do not mention him again to me, or, ſpite of the reſpect I bear you, I will never ſee you more. —"Sir," ſaid I, falling at his feet, "I have only one favour to beg. He is, perhaps, notwithſtand-

ing appearances, more unfortunate than guilty. Deign to hear him before you paſs condemnation." —"Never," ſaid he, "he ſhall never appear in my ſight: I know as much of him as I deſire to know: I know him but too well."

Then all his rage ſubſided, and he became calm and cool; he even reſumed his eaſe of mind, and, what I judged ſtill more terrible, he chatted chearfully with me. I ſaw that his reſolution was taken, and that he thought it fixed. But time, nature, and religion, would, perhaps, ſhake it, and it was the beſt way to leave them to operate.

The young man was in Alſace; and it was but too true that he was married. I ſoon learned it from himſelf. He wrote me word that, irrevocably determined to form that tye, he had ſeen himſelf reduced to the cruel alternative of doing ſo, either without his uncle's knowledge, or againſt his will; and that he had preferred the leaſt unpardonable of theſe two offences. He recommended himſelf to me, and begged me, for the ſake of the trueſt paſſion, to intercede for him, and to exert my zeal to ſoften, if poſſible, the anger of an uncle, juſtly irritated, but ever beloved, and whom he ſhould conſider, even while labouring under his diſpleaſure,

as an object of the moſt tender reſpect. He had juſt written to him, and he confided to me a copy of his letter, without any hope, he ſaid, of obtaining even the ſevere anſwer he deſerved.

"*This information* gave me room to examine, through M. de Glancy's ſilence and ill-humour, the impreſſion that might have been left by l'Ormon's humble and affecting confeſſion of his faults and his regret. I obſerved him with attention, and I did not perceive that the calm into which he had fallen, after the heat of his paſſion was over, was at all diſturbed. His ſoul ſeemed impaſſible, and no longer affected at any thing.

D'Orambre came to ſee him, and I was in hopes that the reception he would give this nephew, would diſcover ſome reſentment at the offence of the other; for my greateſt fear was to ſee him altogether unconcerned. I ſhould have preferred, on M. de l'Ormon's account, the moſt violent ill-will, to this tranquil and ſevere indifference. But d'Orambre was received as uſual, with neither greater nor leſs demonſtrations of friendſhip; I only remarked a profound *ſilence, which no doubt* was enjoined him, in regard to the ſituation of his couſin. In all other reſpects our converſation was as free

and eaſy as ever. L'Ormon ſeemed quite obliterated from his uncle's memory. Three whole years elapſed without his idea ſeeming to be once revived.

In the mean time what became of this unfortunate young man with a wife and two children? (for ſhe has made him a father for the ſecond time) all that remained of the ruins of his fortune was a little farm, beyond Corbeil, ſituated between two royal ſporting grounds, and over-run by the game. He aſked, as a favour, permiſſion to incloſe it with a quickſet hedge and a ditch. He obtained it, and came to take ſhelter, with his wife and children, under the crazy roof of the old farm-houſe.

We often wrote to each other; and, in the courſe of our correſpondence, he was far from lamenting his misfortune, and wiſhed me to conſider it in as light a manner. His pay as captain, a ſmall penſion he had obtained for a brave action, and the produce of the little ſpot of ground he had contrived to render fertile, had put him, he ſaid, above want; thank Heaven, he no longer regretted the loſs of his uncle's kindneſs, but from the moſt diſintereſted ſentiment; and accordingly when he wrote to him, twice a year, as I had adviſed him to do, he expreſſed himſelf like an independent man, and an affectionate

affectionate nephew, without ſpeaking of any other misfortune than that of having incurred his diſpleaſure.

Having heard that ſome profeſſional duties required my preſence at Paris, he wrote me word that he hoped, as I ſhould paſs along the road near Corbeil, I would not refuſe to croſs the Seine, to ſee him in his retreat. This I doubtleſs ſhould have done.

He was in the field at the moment of my arrival; but I was received by a woman, whoſe air and demeanour would have ennobled even a cottage. Nothing could be plainer than her dreſs, nor any thing more noble and intereſting than the character of her countenance. *On hearing my name,* a ſlight cloud of ſorrow ſeemed to be diſpelled, and a look of joy beamed from her eyes.——"*Sir,*" ſaid ſhe, "I experience, at this moment, that nothing in the world is more agreeable *than the preſence of a true* friend, whom we ſee for the firſt time. M. de l'Ormon himſelf could not be happier than I am at a viſit from the Vicar of Verval."——"My joy, Madam," ſaid I, with a ſigh, "is far from being as pure as your's; nor is it here, I muſt confeſs, that I ſhould have deſired to ſee you."—"Why not?" ſaid

ſaid ſhe, with a charming chearfulneſs of manner. "Am I not in a deſirable ſituation? Have I not my huſband and children about me? The privations we undergo can only be painful to ſloth and vanity; and theſe are vices we may very well do without. Beſides, when we have been well aware of our deſtiny, and have been the authors of it ourſelves, we cannot do leſs than find courage to ſupport it.——L'Ormon did not hide from me the unfortunate ſituation he was left in by his father, nor the danger of being diſinherited by his uncle, if he ſhould marry without his conſent, "and his conſent," ſaid he, "we ſhall never obtain"—"You would have obtained it," ſaid I, "if he could have known you; and I myſelf would have procured him that happineſs. You ſhould have done me the favour to paſs for my niece, and he ſhould have ſeen you at my houſe. Beautiful without ornament, juſt as you are now, you would have enchanted him. So much good ſenſe and decency, a mind ſo cultivated and well-ordered, and ſuch a ſweet and noble diſpoſition would have made a due impreſſion. He would ſoon have been brought to ſay to me:—"Why have not I ſuch a niece! and I would have anſwered: it is in your power to have ſuch a one whenever you pleaſe."

"You

"Your fanciful romance, my good Vicar," ſaid ſhe, "is very flattering to me; but ſuch an idea could ſtrike you alone. The only alternative left to our choice, was to join our hands without his knowledge, which was no more than a ſimple offence, or to do ſo againſt his conſent, after having aſked it, and that would have been an inſult."—— "He may pardon me the one," ſaid l'Ormon, "the other never."—"Do not let us deceive ourſelves," anſwered I. "In the eyes of a man ſo haſty and punctilious as M. de Glancy, not only the fault of marrying againſt his conſent, but that of doing ſo unknown to him, may be an unpardonable crime, and eſtrange him from you irrevocably.—Let us place ourſelves in this ſituation, and then aſk our hearts if we ſtand in need of him to be happy. His anſwer was ſincere: he drew a picture of the life we lead here, and ſubmitted it to my conſideration. I loved; I was beloved; I bounded there my ambition; and I prefer this obſcure and quiet life, ſuch as you ſee it, to all the magnificence and luxury of fortune." Thus ſpoke the intereſting and beautiful Anaſtaſia.

L'Ormon returned from his rural occupations and ſprang forward as ſoon as he ſaw me.—"My worthy friend," ſaid he, "I have at laſt the pleaſure

ſure of preſſing you in my arms. You thought, no doubt, you ſhould find me wretched; but you have ſeen my wife and are undeceived. Have you kiſſed my children? here they are both; let them careſs you. They will know one day or other what their father owes you, and they will be grateful. My dear we muſt kill the falcon.* You will have no opportunity here, my good Vicar, of exerting your eloquence againſt luxury. You will make a dinner worthy of the golden age, I give you notice; nor will you dine with people of the iron one." While he was ſpeaking, I had taken his eldeſt boy upon my knee: I kiſſed him with the tears ſtanding in my eyes. "——What does this weakneſs mean, my good Vicar?" ſaid the father with a ſmile. "Do you look upon my children with compaſſion?—Don't be in pain for them. I have already a promiſe that they ſhall both be received at the ſchool of honour and valour;† and if ever they have any ſiſters, as I hope, the girls will find ſome of the ſons of my comrades, who will not diſdain them. They will have for portion, the example, the leſſons, and the virtues of their mother, perhaps her grace and ſome of her charms alſo. I know that fortune is the idol of the world; but ſome

* An alluſion to one of Boccace's tales.

† The military ſchool at Paris.

ſome noble and generous hearts are ſtill to be found among mankind." "You are a proof of it," ſaid Madame de l'Ormon, "I my dear!" exclaimed he, "If I had poſſeſſed a crown, you would ſtill have done me a favour, in permitting me to offer it to you."—"Doctor," added he, "don't take all this for a phraſe borrowed from a novel: you never in your life heard any thing more exactly true."

The ſame affectionate manner prevailed at dinner. The contented look of the huſband, the ſerenity of the wife, the fortitude of both, and the character and kindneſs, openneſs, and cordiality that ennobled their poverty, ſo diſguiſed it, that I could not perſuade myſelf they were in want of any thing.

However, after dinner, going out with l'Ormon to walk over what he ironically ſtyled his domains, I could not help aſking him if he was really as happy as he ſeemed to be?—"No," ſaid he, "I have a weight upon my heart; I ſwear to you, my friend, by all that is ſacred, that it is not my regret for the fortune I have forfeited: but the reproach of the favours which I have received, and for which it is believed, with ſome appearance of truth, that I have made an ungrateful return: if M.

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de Glancy were convinced that I have never ceaſed to love, honour, and conſider him as a ſecond father, no man in the world would be happier than I, though reduced to this ſtate of indigence and diſtreſs. My only concern is my appearing ungrateful, and the not being able even to hope that my uncle will be one day undeceived.

"He ſhall be ſo, if poſſible," ſaid I. "But he has forbid me to mention your name; and I know his diſpoſition: we muſt wait till he come round, and not oppoſe him."

Our farewel was accompanied by the moſt tender proteſtations of unalterable friendſhip. I kiſſed the two ſweet children a thouſand times over; I embraced their good father: ſhall I confeſs all? I let their mother kiſs me, and ſet off.

But I was ſad during my journey. The more my friends had ſeemed reconciled to this misfortune, the leſs I was ſatisfied. I have ever felt regret at ſeeing riches in the hands of thoſe that are greedy of them, and have ever wiſhed them in the poſſeſſion of thoſe who look upon them with the greateſt indifference.

At

At the time of which I am ſpeaking M. de Verval was ſtill alive, and was here. I wrote to him from Paris as he had deſired me, and ſaid a few words in my letter of the matter that occupied my thoughts. But the place, as well as the perſons, was in blank. He took my recital for a tale that I had invented to embelliſh my journey. He was at dinner when my letter was delivered to him.—— "Ah!" ſaid he, "it is the good Vicar, who ſends me an account of his welfare. And do you know how he paſſes his time at Paris? In writing novels. Here is a ſpecimen of them: and he read my letter aloud. The uncle was one of the company. He knew to what place his nephew had retired; d'Orambre had informed him of it, and this place was in my way. The *ſituation ſtruck* him: he divined the reſt, and withdrew penſive and agitated; but the ſuſpicion aroſe in his mind that I myſelf had fallen on this way to move him, and that the arrival of my letter at the moment of M. de Verval's dinner, had been concerted before hand.

On my return, I went to ſee him. He received me coldly, ſaid a word or two about my journey, and hardly anſwered my inquiries reſpecting himſelf and his health. At length after a long ſilence, he ſaid to me with a frown: "I knew, Sir, that

you poſſeſſed a great many talents, but I did not know that the fabricating of tales was one of the number."——"Tales! I Sir?"—"Yes, Sir, tales that are read at M. de Verval's table, and that are found very entertaining."——"I underſtand you, Sir, you are ſpeaking of a letter, in which I deſcribed in a vague and haſty manner what I had juſt ſeen, a family rendered happy by its virtues in the midſt of poverty. But this is no fiction; it is the exact truth."—"And this truth, Sir, you take a pleaſure in divulging!"—"Alas! can it be concealed? I have however ſaid no more than the moſt diſcreet friendſhip may ſay; and I ſaid it innocently."—"A man may then expoſe his friend innocently!" ſaid he in an angry tone. "And who told you, Sir, that I was ſpeaking of you?"——"Who told me? I, who heard it, and ſaw too plainly that the ſcene was concerted, and that I was only invited to be put to the bluſh."——"Neither M. de Verval, nor myſelf," ſaid I, riſing to go away, "are capable of ſuch ſlight of hand tricks. As to me, heaven knows that the intention you aſcribe to me, never entered my imagination; and I am aſtoniſhed that you do not know me better."—"What! you are going away?" ſaid he with emotion.——"Yes, I am going away, that I may no longer be witneſs to your injuſtice."—"Injuſtice to complain, when

when after having made a myſtery!.....He ſtopped. "Of what have I made a myſtery?" ſaid I, preſſing him to explain himſelf.——"Of your connections with a man who has embittered my exiſtence."—"This was what I was waiting for, Sir," ſaid I, "it is not in my nature to be a ſharer in reſentment of which the vigour and duration equally grieve me. It is repugnant to my profeſſion, and ſtill more ſo to my diſpoſition. As to my connections, I make a myſtery of them to no one. It is true, that with you I have obſerved a ſilence impoſed by yourſelf; but it is not the ſilence of diſſimulation; and thoſe who do not chuſe to know what I think, ſhall at any rate know what I do. What is more, *I declare I will never* have the weakneſs to ſacrifice friendſhip for any man."—"And I, Sir," ſaid he, with vehemence, "I am not then your friend?"—"I have two; you are one; but I ſhall not abandon the other."——"The other is a madman."—"He may have been ſo perhaps; but he is not ungrateful, he is a man of honour and I thought him unfortunate; all theſe titles are ſacred in my eyes."—"Unfortunate! can he be otherwiſe?"—"It is his misfortune to love and revere an unjuſt man who hates him."—"Again! an unjuſt man!"—"Yes, very unjuſt, to make a crime a fault, and to proſcribe innocence. It is a ſtrange thing,"

added I, ſeeing him affected, " that with a bag of gold in our hand, we ſhould think ourſelves armed with thunder, and that for a moment of error, delirium, or of that weakneſs of which the cauſe is ſo pardonable, we ſhould glory in being inflexible, and condemn ourſelves to the torment of hating!"—" No I do not hate him; no, I always loved him, and ſince I muſt ſay ſo, I love him ſtill for my misfortune."—" For your misfortune! merciful heaven! is it then a misfortune to love one's own blood."—" Yes, it is a great one for my too tender heart, wounded by ingratitude,"—"No, no ingratitude," ſaid I, interrupting him. " That vice has never infected the mind of the virtuous young man, who loves, who honours you, who bleſſes you in the midſt of his poverty, and who would ſhed his blood in your defence."—" Let him come then," ſaid he, " and throw himſelf into my arms with his wife and children; for I am weary of all this; I muſt put an end to it; I am in want of ſleep, and your romantic pictures by which I am haunted, rob me of my reſt."——" Victory," cried Juliet, " I expected it, and foreſaw the moment of your happineſs."——" Not yet, Miſs Juliet, you are not come to it yet," ſaid I. I do not mean to ſay that I did not experience great pleaſure at ſo ſudden a revolution in the heart of an angry man, who thought himſelf implacable; but

but I had ſtill many pains to undergo, before all was over.

I wrote to l'Ormon without loſs of time, nor did he loſe any in obeying the ſummons. His uncle's reconciliation with him was ſincere and affecting: Madame de l'Ormon with her children in her arms rendered the ſcene, as you muſt imagine, ſtill more touching; and I looked on the ſpectacle with delight. But an uneaſineſs for which I could not account, ſtill hung about the heart of M. de Glancy. L'Ormon perceived it, and fearful of being troubleſome, begged him a few days after to permit him to go with his wife, and attend to the harveſt.

This ſimplicity of manners did not diſpleaſe M. de Glancy. But their departure, inſtead of afflicting him, as I hoped, ſeemed to relieve him from a ſecret inquietude; and the very next day arrived M. d'Orambre. His ſtay was not long, and he went away leſs contented than uſual. I attributed the concern I thought I obſerved in him, to the recall of the poor culprit.

In the mean time the uncle, without mentioning it to us, perceived that his health was gradually de-

clining. He became every day more ſolitary and unſociable; and at laſt would ſee nobody but me.

Towards the end of the Autumn, the indications of approaching death were but too certain. "My good friend," ſaid he one day, "my blood flows languidly in my veins, I feel an oppreſſion of the breaſt, and begin to breathe with difficulty; it is time to ſettle my affairs. You ſaw how deeply I was grieved at the miſconduct of one of my nephews. In my anger I made a will, and in that will I diſinherited him, bequeathing every thing I poſſeſs to the other. I ſent for him, and ſtipulating that the ſecret of theſe my laſt intentions ſhould not be diſcloſed till after my death, made him depoſitary of it. My anger being appeaſed, and nature, or rather juſtice, reclaiming her rights, I ſent again for d'Orambre, and aſked him for the will I had lodged in his hands."—"What, uncle," ſaid he, "could you think that I would ſuffer a deed to exiſt, that paſſion had dictated to you? I reſpected your reſentment, but it would have been cruel in me to take advantage of it. I am rich: l'Ormon is not ſo; and all his hopes are founded upon your inheritance. Your will deprived him of it; I therefore burned it. I hope my good uncle will pardon me."—"If it be true, my worthy friend, that he has burned it, it

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is a noble action; and I believe him capable of it: I never ſaw any thing in the young man that does not bear witneſs in his favour; but I am naturally ſuſpicious, I confeſs, and if he had deceived me!...."—On ſaying this, he fixed his eyes on mine to conſult me; but I caſt them down, and ſilence was my only anſwer.—"Let me ſee you, to morrow," ſaid he: "I ſee that this is one of thoſe caſes in which we ought never to aſk advice."

The next day a new interview took place, and was very intereſting: but he made me promiſe to keep it ſecret to the laſt extremity: I promiſed to do ſo, and am reſolved to keep my word.

From that moment, all the clouds that hung over his mind, ſeemed to be diſpelled. He ſent for his two nephews, treated them both with equal kindneſs, adviſed them to live in friendſhip, begged Madame de l'Ormon to forget what was paſt, careſſed her children, and in the midſt of his careſſes, often turned his eyes kindly on me, as if in ſign of recommendation. Heaven knows if I ſtood in need of it! The night before his death, he urged d'Orambre to follow l'Ormon's example, and to chuſe a virtuous help-mate. "Alas!" ſaid he, "I gave up all that is valuable in life, I loſt its only charm, when

when I condemned myself to this cold, and comfortless widowhood of celibacy."

His disposition, which was naturally good, had lost all its harshness; his soul had taken a softer temper, and the kind and tender manner in which he had received and welcomed l'Ormon, his wife and children had strongly affected them. They wept for him, as for a good father: but their grief was free from ostentation; d'Orambre's was more apparent, and we passed several days after his funeral in mingling together our tears and our regret.

However I perceived that d'Orambre gradually assumed the air and manners of master of the house, that he had an eye upon every thing, and that he had taken possession of the keys. I judged from thence that there was something equivocal in his intentions, and determined to bring him to an explanation.

I asked the two nephews whether it would not be proper to have their uncle's effects sealed up, until an inventory should be taken?—"Its quite unnecessary," said d'Orambre, with great unconcern, "we shall have no dispute together."—And when I was alone with him; "do you know, Sir," said he, "that you embarrassed me. I do not wish

to hurt l'Ormon's feelings. It is however neceſſary that he ſhould be acquainted with our reſpective ſituation. You know how great M. de Glancy's eſteem and friendſhip was for me. I am a ſingle man, he knew I was not much inclined to matrimony, and he conſidered my property as ſure to revert to l'Ormon and his children. He therefore choſe to join his fortune to mine, and to make me depoſitary of the whole. He made me heir to every thing, and the deed which contains his laſt intentions is in my hands. It is a diſagreeable thing to ſay to a man's face; you are kind and prudent, you are our friend; and it will better become you to intimate the matter to my couſin.

"Sir," ſaid I, "it is poſſible that M. de Glancy may have forgot his natural goodneſs in a moment of paſſion and reſentment; but it is one of thoſe movements which ought to be forgotten; which the law diſcountenances, and of which a man of nice honour would ſcorn to take advantage."—"I do not know," ſaid he, in a dry manner, "why you attribute to reſentment, a conſtant and invariable predilection, known to every body, and that you have been witneſs of yourſelf."—"Granting," replied I, "this predilection, of which you have all the appearances in your favour, could it have made

a man,

a man, who was naturally and ſincerely virtuous, cruel, unjuſt, and obdurate to his laſt moment?—Could you believe or would you dare to aſſert it?"—"My Reverend Sir," anſwered he, "your zeal goes beyond all bounds. I contain myſelf; follow my example."—"I beg pardon, Sir," ſaid I, "I have only two or three words more to ſay. Nature and the law call for a fair diviſion of M. de Glancy's fortune. Rich as you are, will not one half be enough for you? Do you envy M. de L'Ormon the other. If you wiſh to honour your uncle's memory, you will efface the very remembrance of what he diſavowed by the moſt unequivocal reconciliation." Every one, Sir," ſaid he, "has his maxims. My way of honouring my uncle's memory is, not to counteract his intentions, and to execute his laſt will."—"I ſhall inſiſt no further," ſaid I, "and will give you time to change your reſolution; but if I am reduced to the neceſſity of defending M. de l'Ormon's rights, as I feel myſelf obliged to do, I give your notice that I will attack your immoderate pretenſions, and ſhall, perhaps, make you repent them."—A bitter and diſdainful ſmile was the only anſwer to my threat, and he concluded by begging me to prevail upon L'Ormon to retire without conteſtation.

From

From that moment I deſpaired of ſeeing him change his tone. I waited however till the following day, to ſee whether reflection would not bring with it ſome ſentiment of ſhame.

The next morning I aſked one of his ſervants how his maſter had paſſed the night. He aſſured me that he had ſlept very ſoundly, and was juſt awake. Indignation took poſſeſſion of me, and I repaired to breakfaſt, armed with all my fortitude. He came alſo thither, and with a greater look of unconcern than I had ever obſerved in him before. "M. d'Orambre," ſaid I, as ſoon as I ſaw him, "you ſeem, laſt night, to have enjoyed the ſlumber of the juſt."—"Like you," anſwered the ſhameleſs wretch.—*Like you*, ſeemed to me the exceſs of inſolence. He careſſed L'Ormon's children, ſpoke in an affection manner to their mother, told her, that her children was his, that he ſhould, in all probability, never have any others, and that he would leave the whole of his property to nobody but them. "Do not be offended," added he, addreſſing himſelf to L'Ormon, "if our uncle thought proper that they ſhould receive his fortune from my hands; it is a depoſit that I will preſerve for them with the greateſt care."

L'Ormon

L'Ormon aſtoniſhed, begged him to explain himſelf. "What!" replied he coldly, "has not the Vicar told you that M. de Glancy made me his heir; and that his will is in my poſſeſſion?" I did not tell him," ſaid I, "and you know the reaſon why. I wiſhed to leave your conſcience time to ſpeak; but ſince it is ſilent, I will be no longer ſo." —I then turned to the huſband and wife, whom I ſaw ſtanding ſtruck with aſtoniſhment, and gazing on each other. "Do not," ſaid I, "accuſe that uncle who ſtretched out his dying arms to you, of having deceived you. No, do not believe him capable of inſulting the misfortune of your children by a deceitful ſhow of affection, and perfidious careſſes. Haſty and violent, he may, in the heat of his anger, have meant to diſinherit a nephew whom he loved, but he could never think of impoſing upon him by treacherous kindneſs. He pardoned you, and, in ſo doing, it was his wiſh that you ſhould be re-inſtated in all the rights of nature. It was his wiſh that this will, dictated by reſentment, might never be known to you. It was his wiſh that it might be deſtroyed; and he aſked for it on purpoſe that no trace of it might remain; but he was told that it was burnt.—"Who told him ſo?" ſaid the villain.—"You, Sir."—"I!"—"You yourſelf; I have his own word for it."—"My Reverend Sir,"

Sir," replied he, "eloquence has too much advantage when it makes the dead ſpeak; it runs no riſk of being contradicted."—"It is not I, Sir, whom your uncle would contradict, if his voice could be heard from the bottom of his tomb. I tremble leſt his aſhes ſhould return to life, and Heaven, to confound you, ſhould permit his voice to break the ſilence of death."—(On hearing this he looked at me with an inſulting ſmile.) "Well then," continued I, "he ſhall ſpeak, ſince you dare force him to it." And inſtantly I took out of my pocket a ſecond will, that the deceaſed had left in my poſſeſſion.

"Read aloud, Sir," ſaid I to l'Ormon; "this contains his laſt intentions." He read; and, by this new deed it was he who was declared ſole heir to all M. de Glancy's fortune.

D'Orambre was thunder-ſtruck, and remained a moment ſilent; but he ſoon recovered his audacity. "It is evident," ſaid he, "that this will is the effect of auricular ſeduction; I ſhall not fail to make it known, and we ſhall ſoon ſee whether it be permitted to impoſe upon the weakneſs of dying men by ſuch artifices as theſe." He then went out in a

tranſport of rage, and a few minutes after we heard his carriage drive away.

A perceptible change had taken place in the countenance of Madam de l'Ormon and her huſband; but, thank Heaven, I did not perceive any ſigns of indecent joy; and, a moment after, I ſaw l'Ormon fall into a deſpondency for which I could not account. "My worthy friend," ſaid he, "you think me very happy; it is now that I am leſs ſo than ever; for I feel myſelf highly blameable. Terrible things have juſt paſſed within me; thinking myſelf diſinherited, I gave way to indignation, and from the bottom of my heart, for the firſt time, I curſed the memory of the beſt of men, my benefactor and ſecond father, whom I had offended, who had pardoned me, and loaded me with favours." The good young man could hardly utter theſe words; ſhame ſtifled his voice.—"Come," ſaid he, "let us go at leaſt to his tomb, and aſk pardon of his ſhade. Alas! I never ſtood ſo much in need of his indulgence.

It was there; it was when I ſaw the tears of repentance and gratitude ſtream upon the ſtone that covered the aſhes of M. de Glancy; it was when I ſaw the huſband and wife hold their children over the

the ſacred tomb, and make them kiſs it; it was then that I enjoyed perfect felicity. How intereſting were both of them. They owed much to me; they were ſenſible of it; and yet, in this moment, I had no ſhare of their attention. Their hearts were entirely taken up with the true object of their gratitude; but, when that duty was fulfilled, friendſhip took its turn; and I had an opportunity of obſerving how much the remembrance of obligations elevates and ennobles the mind. "The firſt of pleaſures for us," ſaid they, "to which no other is comparable, is that of knowing that this generous man loved us to the laſt; but, after this delightful idea, the one we hold the deareſt, and value above all the gold in the world, is the reflection that we owe the return of his kindneſs to ſuch a friend as you."—"For Heaven's ſake," replied I, "if I have been in any degree inſtrumental towards your mutual reconciliation, let me at leaſt enjoy the merit of having done ſo; for when I am thus a hundred times repaid, there is none left for us to enjoy. If benevolent actions were always repaid by ſuch gratitude, there would be no more virtue in doing good.

THE NUN.

TALE SEVENTH.

"I WAS once in my life very happy too," ſaid the Marchioneſs of Solange, "and that very much in the ſame manner as the worthy Vicar. The time is now very diſtant, but yet it is ſtill freſh in my memory.

Madame de Clarville, my ſiſter, was a woman worthy of a better age than this. I was brought up with her; but our ſecond education was not the ſame. Her huſband, whom ſhe doated upon, was a very ſenſible man; he improved her underſtanding, and communicated to her his own turn of mind. Mine, whom I did not love leſs tenderly, was what is called a man of the world, and left me to my natural diſpoſition. It was even ſaid that he ſpoiled me; but I do not believe a word of it. The truth is, that after two years of matrimony, my ſiſter and myſelf were not at all alike; but, overlooking the caprices and fancies ſhe was free from herſelf, ſhe promiſed not to withdraw her affection, ſo long as my giddineſs ſhould not make me forfeit my right to her eſteem; and I had the good for-

tune

tune to reach the age when all dangers are over, without loſing the ſmalleſt part of her friendſhip. The *ſtyle* of our houſes, as may be eaſily imagined, were widely different; the manners of ancient times that prevailed in her's, and the faſhionable ones that reigned in mine, made a perfect contraſt. She was, however, obliged to admit of ſome mixture at the marriage of her ſon. Youth attracted youth; but, among my nephew's acquaintance, thoſe that were the moſt amiable in my opinion, were the moſt diſliked by my ſiſter. She found them at once conſequential and frivolous; ſtiff when they affected grace, and dull when they aimed at gaiety; and the moſt diſtinguiſhed among them, for the accompliſhments of his age, was preciſely the one for whom ſhe conceived the greateſt averſion.

Villarce, deſtined by his birth to hold the firſt offices of the magiſtracy, ſeemed to have engaged in that line of life out of complaiſance for his family, and to wiſh the world to believe that the Preſidency of a Parliament was not what he was beſt calculated for. In every thing but his dreſs he had the air of a military man; of an elegant and eaſy deportment, ſcorning the tireſome gravity of the long robe, and diſplaying all the graces of a free and genteel addreſs. His converſation with the fair

ſex never paſſed the bounds of reſpectful gallantry; but, although irreprehenſible in his language, his looks were not equally modeſt and reſerved.

You will readily ſuppoſe that a magiſtrate of ſo much elegance was not ſuited to the taſte of my ſiſter; nor was ſhe better pleaſed with his turn of mind. He had what the world calls wit, ſallies of imagination, and uncommon fanciful modes of expreſſion, but little or no coherence in his ideas. He would talk with you as much as you could deſire, provided you would not oblige him to reaſon; flying from topic to topic, and dwelling upon none; he would have thought himſelf growing dull if he had reflected two minutes on what he had ſaid, or on what he was going to ſay; but the more his converſation was ſuperficial, the more it was brilliant.

The young people of both ſexes were never tired of liſtening to him. As he knew a little of every thing he ſeemed a man of univerſal knowledge, and it was a great matter of wonder how he could have learned ſo much at ſo early a time of life.

But neither my ſiſter, nor the riper heads that compoſed her intimate ſociety, admired this ſelf-ſufficiency; they ſaw nothing in it but a varniſh

of

of falſe wit laid over a ſtrong ground of vanity. For my part I was more indulgent, and, without enquiring whether there were any ſolidity in his judgment, I found him very entertaining. I only wiſhed him to poſſeſs a little leſs conceit, and a little more modeſty; and my niece, Caliſta, as you will preſently hear, was pretty much of my opinion.

One day when I was vindicating Villarce, in her preſence, from the ſevere reproach of foppery:—"You have taken a pretty cauſe, indeed to defend!" ſaid my ſiſter: "the preſumption of a giddy young fellow, who pretends to know every thing, pronounces ſentence on every thing, and will not even deign to hear the man of information and ſenſe, who might be his maſter. Don't talk to me of ſuch an empty head, or ſo vain a creature, ſo full of himſelf, and who, under a habit that calls at leaſt for decent gravity, aſſumes the airs that are the leaſt compatible with the manners of his profeſſion. I pity the woman who ſhall have him for a huſband, I pity the mother who has ſuch a ſon, and I am very ſorry that he is intimate with mine. My door ſhall no longer be open to any thing that reſembles him."

If

If at that moment I had looked at my niece, I ſhould have ſeen the impreſſion theſe words made upon her mind; but it eſcaped me. The intereſt I took in the cauſe of Villarce was not very great, and I inſiſted no further. The ſociety at my ſiſter's ſoon after reſumed its ſerious caſt, and the cold reception he met with making him diſcontinue his viſits, I only met with him, at diſtant periods, in the faſhionable world, where I thought he ſeemed more ſteady and reſerved, but leſs amiable. There is ſure a charm in levity, for no one corrects himſelf of it, without loſing a part of his amiability.

Young Madame de Clarville, naturally gentle and timid, readily caught the manners and taſte of her mother-in-law. Her huſband adored her; his exiſtence was wrapped up in her's; and true happineſs having taken place in his ſoul of diverſions and tranſient illuſions, he bad adieu himſelf to that diſſipated life, in which none but vacant minds can find enjoyment.

It was in the midſt of the domeſtic peace that my niece, Caliſta, ſeemed to wait patiently for her mother to diſpoſe of her. We ſpoke of ſettling her in the world; and her mother had the goodneſs to

conſult her concerning the choice of a huſband; for the number of admirers increaſed every day.

"Madam," ſaid Caliſta, in her ſoft and modeſt manner, "you have made the duties of wife and mother appear ſo ſacred, and at the ſame time ſo formidable to me, that before I dare think I am capable of fulfilling them, it is neceſſary that I ſhould conſult and be ſure of myſelf. It is a ſerious and minute examination that I wiſh to make in ſilence, and at the foot of the altar, between heaven and myſelf. Deign then, before you diſpoſe of your daughter, who will always be ſubject to your will, to grant her, far from the world, and in the peace of the cloiſter, a ſhort interval of ſolitude and recollection.

This anſwer aſtoniſhed my ſiſter, although ſhe was edified:—"I ſhould have hoped," ſaid ſhe, "that a good mother would have been admitted to this ſecret council between heaven and you, and that you would have had no occaſion to leave her, to diſpoſe yourſelf to obey her more chearfully.

"Madam," anſwered Caliſta, "if like heaven, you could read my thoughts, without obliging me to explain all their intricacies, I ſhould ſay: read,

and

and diſpoſe of me. But the tender and timid reſpect I ſhall retain for you as long as I live, the pious fear of diſpleaſing or afflicting you, and the ſtill more urgent fear of not appearing worthy your love, will never allow me to give way without a little reſerve, to the confidence you ſo well deſerve. I might have the wiſh of doing ſo: but I ſhould never poſſeſs ſufficient fortitude. What mind is pure enough to ſhew itſelf naked and unmaſked to any eyes but his, who ſees and is diſpoſed to pardon every thing.

This was confeſſing ingenuouſly enough, that ſhe had ſome ſecret in her heart that ſhe did not dare to tell her. My ſiſter however underſtood her anſwer otherwiſe. She agreed that there was a kind of *ſelf-examination* of which we owe an account to God alone, and that exacting it from her daughter ſhe ſhould exceed the bounds of maternal authority. The convent was choſen; my niece was conducted thither by her mother, and the latter in making me a confident of the converſation they had together, did not ſhew any ſigns of uneaſineſs: I felt very little myſelf, and the apparent calmneſs and ſerenity of my niece, whenever I went to ſee her, completely did away my apprehenſions.

However

However at the expiration of three months, Calista wrote to her mother, begging her in the most respectful, but most pressing terms, to approve of her taking the veil. Her letter breathed the piety of an angel, and affected my sister. "God forbid," said she, "in communicating it to me, that I should oppose so holy a vocation, if it be real! but I wish to try her." As Calista was not twenty years of age, she required her not to take the veil, till she should have attained the age prescribed for making monastic vows.

In a girl entitled by her beauty, birth, and fortune to all the enjoyments the world affords, this revolution appeared singular; especially as she seemed to have taken it before she went into the convent. I wished to discover the cause; and in the first place found means to have a private interview with the Abbess. She was an excellent woman, a little proud of her birth, but truly devout, and amid all the chit-chat of a convent, united a tolerable share of wit with great ingenuousness of disposition.

"Is it true, Madam," said I, "that Mademoiselle Clarville, my niece, is desirous of taking the veil?"—"No Madam," answered the Abbess; it

is

is not a deſire, it is a fair and clear vocation; I warrant you it is, and I am never miſtaken in theſe caſes. In the firſt place, ſhe has all the fervour of a ſaint, the docility of a child, the gentleneſs, the candour, and innocence of a dove.....Ah! Madam, how lucky ſhe is to have eſcaped thoſe vultures.—And then, with ſo much beauty, ſuch *unmindfulneſs of herſelf, ſuch delicate baſhfulneſs*, ſuch timid modeſty, that a word, a mere nothing alarms, and that the tainted breath of the world might have tarniſhed. Good God! how many dangers has ſhe avoided!——Yes, yes, Madam, I know a little of what's going on in the world. I ſee many perſons here of the firſt quality, either my relations or their friends. I alſo ſee grave and pious perſons, Father Ambroſe, Father Anſelm, Father Seraphim, the counſellors of families, the luminaries of the age; and in every thing they tell me of the world, I ſee nothing but folly, deceit, and vanity, frivolous ſpectacles, inſipid entertainments, tireſome companies, dreadful luxury, and pitiable pleaſures.

"Yes, but my niece is unacquainted with all this," ſaid I, "unleſs you, Madam, have informed her of it."—"Oh! no: heaven is my witneſs, that before ſhe came here, her reſolution was taken to

bid

bid adieu to the vanity of the world: I have only confirmed her in it."

This firſt point being once cleared up; "but madam," ſaid I, "in your converſations with her, do you find that chearfulneſs, and thoſe effuſions of gaiety that beſpeak a contented mind?" "No," ſaid ſhe, "*her diſpoſition does not incline her to* gaiety, but rather to muſing, meditation, ſilence, and taſte for ſolitude; but theſe are the moſt rare and precious gifts of heaven."

"Thus was I likewiſe ſure that my niece was ſad and penſive: and in this melancholy," ſaid I to the Abbeſs, "do you never perceive a little *ennui*?"— "*Ennui*, madam," ſaid ſhe, "who can find time to be dull here, where every one is free to chuſe an active or contemplative life. The active life conſiſts of the various buſineſs of the convent, which indeed does not ſuit your niece. But as to the contemplative one, I can aſſure you, madam, that ſhe delights in it: I perceive it even in our recreations. For inſtance, when walking in our garden, for our garden is the country in miniature, trees that afford the fineſt ſhade, birds, verdure, flowers, fruit; and over head a fine ſky, bright clouds, a radiant ſun; and then in the evening, the ſtars, the moonlight,

and the blue firmament. You muſt allow, madam, that nothing can be ſo enchanting:" "Well," ſay I to your niece, "is not this enough my dear child, to fill a mind with joy and admiration."—"Yes, when the mind is at peace, theſe muſt be very ſatisfactory pleaſures."—"Then I obſerve her fall again into a penſive mood, and ſigh at the emotion excited by theſe wonders of nature. Sometimes her tranſport goes ſo far that tears ſtream from her eyes.

You will eaſily believe that I accounted for theſe tears in a very different way from the Abbeſs.—"I hope," added ſhe, "that ſiſter Caliſta will ſucceed to my dignity. I am fifty years old, ſhe twenty; I ſhall have time to fit her for it, and no care ſhall be wanting." "I fancy, madam, that this proſpect is not unpleaſing to you." "But my dear Caliſta is ſo modeſt, that ſhe will not hear of it; and as if an angel had told her that I ſhall outlive her, ſhe aſſures me it will be I, who ſhall weep upon her tomb."

On hearing theſe laſt words, I was convinced that the heart of my niece had received a mortal wound; and I left the Abbeſs with a firm reſolution of ſnatching this weak and tender victim from the altar.

I ſaw

I ſaw her the next day; nor can I yet conceive how ſo young a mind could have gained a ſufficient aſcendancy over itſelf, to conceal its diſeaſe.

I endeavoured to make her feel the conſequences of her determination. I repreſented to her all the gloom of walls and grates that would ſurround her, the ſtate of captivity, and everlaſting dependence in which ſhe would live, the mixture of diſpoſitions often incompatible, and yet for ever united in the ſame place, in ſhort, the entire privation of all liberty. She anſwered that for a ſex bound by common decency to a quiet and retired life little ſpace was wanting to breathe, live, and die; that walls are nothing to thoſe who have no inclination to paſs them, nor to know what is going on without; that reaſon, gentleneſs and modeſty would render the worſt tempers tractable; that in every condition of life we are born to be dependent, and woe to them who know no law nor conſtraint; that we are free as long as we deſire conſtantly only what we ought, and at that rate at leaſt as much ſo in a cloiſter, as in the world, where we are often obliged to wiſh for what we ought not.

Struck ſpeechleſs by this anſwer, I communicated it to her mother, who while ſhe grieved with me, could not help thinking it highly reaſonable.

She went to ſee her daughter; a„d expreſſed to her with much affection, but not without a kind of reſpect for her vocation, the regret ſhe ſhould feel at being deprived of her.—"No," ſaid Caliſta, "we ſhall not be deprived of one another. Whatever my lot in life had been, I ſhould have been ſeparated from you; I ſhall be the leaſt ſo poſſible, and with this difference, that in the world a thouſand objects of duty and diſſipation would have vied with your idea, and might have robbed you of a part of my affection, whereas in a cloiſter God and you will be all my occupation. My brother and his amiable wife will form a ſociety ſufficiently intereſting to inſure your domeſtic comfort and happineſs; new objects will join the charm of their innocence; this is enough to make you happy, and if heaven could permit ſo good a heart to have its ſorrows, it *would be then, my deareſt mother, that I would aſk* the preference, and that my arms ſhould be open *to you at all times. Others will ſhare in your felicity*; as for me I will ſhare, and ſoften your afflictions, and we will offer them together to the ſupreme conſoler.

My poor ſiſter came home quite taken up and enchanted with the virtue of her daughter, and above all thoroughly perſuaded that ſhe was happy in

in the way of life ſhe had choſen. For my part, laying aſide my uneaſineſs, I began to think that ſhe really did no more than obey the impulſe of holy inſpirations; and the two years of trial being almoſt elapſed, we were on the point of letting her take the veil.

"Well, daughter," ſaid I to her at laſt, "you are my daughter too, and I hoped you would have ſupplied the place of thoſe I have loſt; your reſolution is then invariably fixed?"—"Yes, Aunt," ſaid ſhe, "I am perfectly reſolved; and for the firſt time I ſaw her aſſume a look of fortitude." "This is the laſt converſation," ſaid I, "that I ſhall have with you on ſo ſad a ſubject. Let us ſpeak without diſguiſe: you are going then to ſacrifice birth, fortune, and the hopes of the moſt brilliant ſituation, every thing in a word, without pain, and without regret?" *A diſdainful ſmile expreſſed the* contempt with which ſhe looked upon all theſe advantages. "*Now tell me,*" *continued* I, "*if you* are acquainted with duties more ſacred, or more grateful than thoſe of wife and mother?"—"No," ſaid ſhe, "there are none more grateful or more ſacred."—"And do you think, that in the eyes of God there is any thing more agreeable than a woman who fulfils them?"—"No, nothing I am per-

ſuaded of it." "When we feel ourſelves called to that ſtate of life, do we not by our refuſal counteract the will of nature, and the intention of heaven?" —"Yes, but we ſhould have the virtues neceſſary, to think ourſelves called to it."—"My dear child, let us exaggerate nothing: what are theſe virtues? are they not ſoftneſs, modeſty, a love of order, and fortitude of a mind ſubject and devoted to all that the ſanctity of ſuch bonds require?"—"Yes, ſuch is the pattern I have had before my eyes."—"Well! which of theſe virtues do you not poſſeſs, or would you not in your mother's ſituation?"—"Ah! my mother never had a ſentiment in her ſoul, that her duty forbade her to confeſs."

This is the word I was waiting for; this ſingle word has ſaid all, and I at length divine what is paſſing in your breaſt."—"What have I ſaid then," replied Caliſta, with alarm.—"Nothing, if you repent your having truſted me with your ſecret; but every thing if you conſent that your beſt friend ſhall be depoſitary of it."—"Well, ſpeak: I ſhall only have ſtrength enough to liſten to you." And on ſaying theſe words ſhe burſt into tears.

"You have conceived in the world," ſaid I, "an inclination which you don't think reaſonable, and

and of which you deſpair of being cured." "Madam," ſaid ſhe with conſcious dignity; "I never have, nor ever ſhall love any thing that is not worthy of my eſteem." "But there are other conſiderations that unfortunately a young and tender heart does not attend to in its choice."—"What then is this choice, which theſe conſiderations would not admit of?"

"I have ſaid enough, aunt; do not require a uſeleſs effort; that would be a torture to me. Suffice it to know that this too unconquerable inclination would never meet with my mother's conſent. I am certain of it, and nothing remains for me but to hide it for ever. As to him, who has diſturbed my repoſe without intending it, it is a ſecret between heaven and me, and I ſhould be inconſolable if his name had eſcaped my lips."

"But, my dear girl, with this paſſion in your heart, you are going to make a vow to bid farewel to the world, and to devote yourſelf entirely to heaven!"

"Yes, aunt, and that vow ſhall be faithfully fulfilled. I ſhould be criminal if I went to the altar to deceive a man, and promiſe him the poſſeſſion of

of a heart full of the image of another; but I am innocent before God. I neither deceive nor offend him. As there can be no rivality between him and his creature, there will be no jealouſy. He will ſee me offer up as a victim to him every day, what is deareſt to my affections. No regret will ſully the purity of this offering; and if God leaves an involuntary ſentiment in my heart, it will be ſanctified by making it a ſacrifice. I will ſay more: I ſhall perhaps be happy, in elevating myſelf towards him, to ſhew him the ſad remains of my chain and the marks of his victory."

While ſpeaking thus, her countenance took greater animation, her eyes, lifted up towards heaven, ſparkled with the humid tear of joy; nor did I ever ſee any thing ſo affecting as this mixture of two kinds of love, one of which ſeemed proud of ſacrificing the other. I was going away, enchanted with what I had ſeen, and wondering what in the world could be the object that had made ſo ſtrong an impreſſion on her heart, when what her mother had ſaid one day before her, when ſpeaking to me of Villarce, came acroſs my recollection like a dream. It is he beyond a doubt, ſaid I to myſelf: poor girl! I am not ſurpriſed that ſhe ſhould deſpair of obtaining him. From that moment I felt myſelf ſtrongly

ly intereſted in Villarce's favour; I made enquiry about him in the faſhionable world; I ſpoke of him to every body; but nobody could tell me what was become of him.

"The day draws near," ſaid my ſiſter, "I muſt go and ſee my daughter, and I have no longer ſufficient fortitude." "Ah!" ſaid I, "If you did but know what has come to my knowledge reſpecting a ſimilar vocation, you would be weaker ſtill." She aſked me what it was. "A young girl," ſaid I, "in a fit of fervor and religion, reſolved to embrace a monaſtic life; her parents conſented, and ſhe took the veil; but as ſoon as ſhe had pronounced the fatal vow, her fortitude abandoned her, and regret and gloomy ſadneſs took poſſeſſion of her ſoul: the wretched girl concealed a paſſion in her heart, the flame of which conſumed her; the bloom of youth faded on her cheeks, her health declined rapidly"—"But how came ſhe to take the veil, when her heart was the prey of ſuch a paſſion?" —"She loved a young man of good birth and morals, and of a fortune ſuited to her own, but full of the ridiculous affectation and vanity of youth: her parents refuſed their conſent, and ſhe took her reſolution. "The cruel creatures!" exclaimed my ſiſter, "why treat ſo hardly a young man, whom

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reaſon perhaps would ſoon have matured. Had I not myſelf conceived the moſt ſerious averſion, and the moſt ſovereign contempt for a young man, whom a very ſhort ſpace of time has rendered worthy of my eſteem. He ſeemed to me made up of pride, vanity, frivolity, and diſguſting preſumption; well, my ſon aſſures me that he is ſo totally altered as not to be known for the ſame man. He is modeſt, reſerved, circumſpect in his converſation and behaviour; in a word, he is the pattern of the young men of his profeſſion; and has extricated himſelf from difficult ſituations, with a mixture of prudence and firmneſs truly admirable at his time of life." "Is it not," ſaid I, "M. de Villarce?" —"The very ſame. He has ſhewn a deſire to be reſtored to my good graces; I have conſented with pleaſure to receive him, and am impatient to redreſs the wrongs done him by my prejudices."

You may judge of the pleaſure I felt at this gleam of hope. It came from heaven. "Your ſaying that the young man was ſo much improved," ſaid I, concealing my joy as much as poſſible, "gives me great pleaſure; I was always partial to him."—"I know you were," ſaid ſhe, "and for that reaſon I beg you to come and help me to receive him to-morrow. As I wiſh to ſpeak to him without conſtraint, we

we ſhall be alone." You will needs ſuppoſe that I did not fail to be preſent at the meeting. The young man came in with an air of the greateſt timidity, and ſeemed confuſed at the remembrance of what was paſt. His countenance, naturally noble, had acquired a look of dignity; but it was pale and wan. As he did not dare to ſpeak, my ſiſter was the firſt to break ſilence.

"Sir," ſaid ſhe, "I am very happy to ſee you; for you have reaſon to complain of me; and though the public eſteem has well revenged my prejudices, yet I wiſh to be eaſed from my own reproaches, and thoſe you have a right to make me."—"Make you reproaches, madam!" anſwered he; "I never had any thing but thanks to return you; for the misfortune of having incurred your diſpleaſure, though the moſt ſevere, was the moſt uſeful leſſon I ever received." (I was touched to the heart by the expreſſion he gave *to the words, the moſt ſevere.*) "Yes, madam," continued he, "it is to your ſeverity that I have the obligation, if the clouds of vanity in which I was involved in the world, and which, but for you, would perhaps long have hid me from myſelf, were all at once diſpelled. I oppoſed your opinion to all the frivolous ſuffrages I had canvaſſed for with ſo much ardour; and I was

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ſenſible that a man, baniſhed from your ſociety, for his extravagant airs and affectation, could no longer be entitled to his own eſteem. I bluſhed in my own eyes, and from that moment I felt myſelf altered." —"You are prodigiouſly ſo, indeed," replied my ſiſter; "and I am happy to have contributed in producing this change, which time would have brought about without me. But have you not, ſir, like me, been too ſevere towards yourſelf? I have heard your life of ſtudy and application ſpoken of, and think I perceive that it has injured your health." —"Yes, madam, it is impaired; nor do I hope to ſee it re-eſtabliſhed; but the exceſs of application, to which it is attributed, is only the apparent cauſe. I know what my diſeaſe is, and I know it admits of no remedy."—"No remedy! at your time of life!" replied my ſiſter, in a tone of voice expreſſive of concern. "Yes, madam; at my time of life there are cruel attacks, of which we may linger long, but can never be cured."—My ſiſter changed the converſation to divert him from his gloomy ideas. "This young man," ſaid ſhe when he was gone, "is in love."—"I think ſo too," ſaid I, "and I ſuſpect that it was he who was in love with the unfortunate girl I was ſpeaking of."—"He!" ſaid my ſiſter, with emotion; "and who is the unhappy girl?"—"It is my niece; it is your daughter."—

"Heavens!

"Heavens! what do you tell me? my daughter! They loved one another then unknown to me!"—"And unknown to each other," added I. "They equally flatter themſelves that their ſecret will die with them; nor do I know any more than what I have divined."—"We muſt clear up all this," ſaid my ſiſter; "Go and ſee my daughter; try to make her open her heart, and let the Abbeſs know that every thing is ſuſpended. On the other hand I have invited Villarce to ſup with me to morrow, and ſhall ſoon know from himſelf what is going on in his mind."

Villarce, who, for his part, deſired to meet with her alone, came early, and the converſation began without reſerve. "Sir," ſaid my ſiſter, "you have ſpoken to me of your ſorrows; and the ſincereſt eſteem, and the moſt ſerious concern make me eager to know what is the nature of them, that I may offer you, if not ſalutary advice, at leaſt the conſolation of friendſhip; for, I repeat, that it is by that ſentiment I mean to redreſs the wrong I have done you."——"Madam," anſwered the young man, "your kindneſs ſeems to foreſee what I have to diſcloſe, ſo very ſeaſonable is the confidence it inſpires me with. I will let you ſee to the very bottom of my heart.

While I was ruining myſelf in your eſteem, by the follies and affectation that I had made my rule of conduct, I was drinking, at your houſe, deep and intoxicating draughts of the delicious nectar of hope and love; and congratulated myſelf on a growing paſſion that was deſtined to be my torment. The charm was ſoon broken, and then I felt that the fatal impreſſion of an object, torn from me for ever, was deeply fixed at the bottom of my heart. I have ſince heard from my friend, that his ſiſter having voluntarily, and of her own accord, retired to a convent, is deſirous of taking the veil, to the great regret of her mother and family. I know moreover, that the ſacrifice is to be conſummated in a few days. I have no idea of diſſuading her from it, or of obtaining from you a uſeleſs attempt. Nor is it my intention to act any romantic part, or to give the world an opportunity of counting me in the number of wretched and deſpairing lovers. I have been already too much ſpoken of; nothing more remains but to die in peace; my friend himſelf, who ſees my health decline, is not acquainted with my diſeaſe. But you, madam, whoſe breaſt I look upon as a ſanctuary, and who are ſo cloſely connected with the object of my pain, you have a right to be informed of them, as ſoon as you expreſs the deſire. I confeſs that it will be alſo a relief

lief for him who adores Mademoiſelle de Clarville, who will never ſee her more, but who muſt ever love her, to be able to ſpeak of a perſon ſo dear to us both."

"If I were perfectly unconnected with the cauſe of your misfortune," ſaid my ſiſter, "I ſhould feel intereſted in it by all the ſentiments that virtuous love inſpires; and, after having ſolicited your confidence, I ſhould conſider it as a duty to mitigate your affliction, if I could do no more. How much more is it incumbent on me, when the innocent cauſe of the diſeaſe that threatens your exiſtence is a ſecond ſelf? What I have not done for myſelf, although my daughter, whom I was on the point of loſing, was moſt dear to me, I will do for you, ſir, depend upon it; and, bating any abuſe of maternal authority, every thing that does not go beyond advice and perſuaſion, ſhall be employed to bring back my daughter. Then, if like me, ſhe is ſenſible of the value of a heart like your's ſhe is your own; and my happineſs ſhall be the inſuring of her's." Before the words were out of her mouth the good young man threw himſelf at her feet.

"I do not know how to deſcribe pathetic ſcenes," continued Madame de Solange, "and, beſides, any

one will eaſily ſuppoſe what a dying man would ſay, if called back to life by a ſalutary potion, or a drowning man to whom ſome charitable hand ſhould throw a rope. I leave theſe tranſports of gratitude to your imagination, and return to Caliſta, whom I ſaw the day after.

It was not difficult, in ſpeaking of her mother, to bring about the recital of her reconciliation with M. de Villarce, and their firſt converſation. Caliſta bluſhed while liſtening to me; but without ſhewing any other emotion. It was not till theſe words, *there are cruel attacks of which we may linger long, but can never be cured,* that ſhe added:—"Oh! no, never; they are never to be cured."

"Do not you think like us," ſaid I, "that this young man's heart is the prey of ſome ſecret paſſion?"—"Alas!" anſwered ſhe, "it is very likely; and if it be ſo I pity him; for he has not the ſame conſolation that I have."—"And if ſhe whom he loves, loved him alſo without his knowing it? and if they were both unhappy only becauſe they do not know it it is in their power to be happy?"——"Why," ſaid ſhe, "Aunt, why do you come to diſturb me with theſe dangerous ideas? I ſee too plainly that you think you have divined my ſecret; but do

do you think that you have alſo divined his? And if I ſhould not be the perſon, only think what harm you do me!"—"And if it ſhould be you?" ſaid I, fixing my eyes on her's. She threw herſelf into my arms, and I felt my boſom bathed with her tears. "Well it is you; he has told my ſiſter ſo, and we can no longer doubt it."—"And what did my mother anſwer?" ſaid ſhe with a faultering voice. "That you are his, if you pleaſe."—"What, aunt, muſt I then ſhow ſuch inconſiſtency of conduct, and change my reſolution, becauſe a huſband has been mentioned to me? What will the world ſay of me?"—"That you have obeyed your mother. Did you not yourſelf declare your ſubjection, and ſay that your reſolution depended upon her will?" —"Yes; I ſaid ſo."—"Well, your mother commands, and you will do no more than obey." She embraced me again, and, from the palpitation of her heart, and her haſty reſpiration, I thought I felt all the ſighs ſhe had ſtifled for two years paſt, iſſue, from her boſom. I left her in haſte to return to my ſiſter.

"I was not miſtaken; I have her confeſſion," ſaid I, "and it is Villarce whom ſhe loves. But ſhe will not change her reſolution, unleſs in obedience to your orders." "I order her," ſaid my ſiſ-

ter, " to repair hither this very evening. Go and bring her back to me. The hours of ſorrow are long, and I wiſh to ſpare this intereſting young man another night of torment."

She ſent for him, and encouraging him, and inſtilling by degrees the balm of hope, ſhe weakened, as much as poſſible, the commotion that the too ſudden ſhock of joy might have occaſioned. She acted prudently, for he would never have been able to ſupport it.

Her daughter and I ſoon arrived. " *Here ſhe* is," ſaid ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe ſaw us; " She is ſubmiſſive to my will; ſhe yields to it without repugnance; or ſome future day, perhaps, ſhe will tell you more. Her mother will not rob her of that pleaſure.

It was then that we were ſenſible of the neceſſity of my ſiſter's precaution; for Villarce, all prepared as he was to bear the exceſs of his happineſs, could not find fortitude ſufficient; his knees ſunk under him, and had not I ſupported him he would have fallen. Caliſta ſaw only her mother, in whoſe arms ſhe lay weeping with love and pleaſure. By degrees every thing became calm; and, I ſaw them at table,

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ſhe ſitting beſide her mother, and he at my ſide oppoſite to one another, and none of them daring to raiſe their eyes; they could not ſpeak, ſo great was their confuſion and ſurpriſe to diſcover that they were lovers, without having ſuſpected it.——I have now to mention a ſtrange circumſtance; but, with ſubmiſſion to maternal affection, and love itſelf, I imagine I was the happieſt of the four, from this reflexion, that I had been the cauſe of the happineſs of them all.

A FILLIP ON THE NOSE.

TALE EIGHTH.

"IN former days of chivalry," ſaid Baron Driſac, in the accent of his province, "every gentleman had a ſtory of proweſs or adventure to tell at his fire-ſide. Theſe romantic times are gone; we have now neither giants nor enchanters, nor are princeſſes any longer carried off. For my part I am quite at a loſs what to ſay; and, in looking back upon the events of my paſt life, the happieſt day I can recollect, was that on which I received *a fillip on the noſe*, as I ſtood admiring the pictures in the exhibition-room." "What! upon the noſe, ſay you?" cried Juliet.

Juliet. "Yes, my young lady, this is the very noſe; ſo here is my tale.

"I was only twenty years old when I came to Paris, with all my fortune in my pocket-book, and the expectation of a lieutenancy, upon which I had erected all my hopes and ambitious ſchemes. I waited a long while for this commiſſion. It was in time of war, danger ſeemed to be courted, and every vacancy was ſo earneſtly ſought for by our young men ambitious of glory, that my little ſtock of money was inſenſibly decreaſing while I was waiting my turn. I managed it, however, with great œconomy, and ſupplied the place of ruinous pleaſures by adopting thoſe that were prudent.—Actuated partly from natural taſte and partly from conſiderations of œconomy, I became an amateur of the arts, and I was fond of the company of artiſts. My play-houſes were their working-rooms, and I had nothing to pay. Still becoming more capable of deriving pleaſure from the works of genius, I could always gratify myſelf without putting my hand into my purſe, and this I found very convenient. Beſides, among theſe artiſts, I had the good fortune to meet with well-informed men, characters that would have honoured antiquity —frankneſs of manners which I liked exceedingly, and

and a kind of pride which I did not diſlike; much gaiety and often wit and humour, with a livelineſs of imagination, which ſtrongly reminded me of home.

I felt myſelf more attached to Carlo Vanloo than to any other of my companions. A better painter, or what is more, a better man did not exiſt. With all the dignity of genius, he poſſeſſed all the ſimplicity of a child. He obſerved my aſſiduity, and was not inſenſible to the honeſt praiſes I beſtowed upon his works, he conceived a friendſhip for me, and in a little time he permitted me to viſit him at his own houſe. It was the abode of happineſs and of innocent delights. His wife ſang like a nightingale, and the beauty of his daughter was an opening roſe. It afforded an exhibition of ſpring in its faireſt appearance. "You were in danger of falling in love," ſaid Darvis to him in a low voice. "O, no, I looked upon the charming Caroline only as the maſterpiece of her father. Her hand was already promiſed, and her heart pre-engaged. And to what purpoſe ſhould I have loved her?—No, no, love never enters a man's heart, entirely alone, or of its own accord. Hope always accompanies and introduces it; beſides I had my commiſſion in my head, and the moment I got it, I ſet out for the camp.

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As we bade each other adieu, "brave young man," ſaid Carlo, "you are going to be ſhot at, and I can do you a piece of ſervice. *Bagieux*, the beſt ſurgeon in the army is my particular friend, here is a letter of recommendation to him." I received it with great ſatisfaction. Bagieux was a man of no ſmall importance in the day of battle, and lucky was it for me that I made him my friend. Eight days after my arrival, I received two wounds at the attack of Laufeld, one in my thigh, which was very ſlight, the other in the right ſhoulder, which well required the attention of an able ſurgeon. Bagieux whom Vanloo had requeſted not to loſe ſight of me in affairs of conſequence, heard I was wounded and flew to my relief.

Valuable friend of my friend Carlo," ſaid I to him, "conſider this is my ſword arm—do your utmoſt to ſave it." He examined the wound—the ball was lodged in it, and it was neceſſary to extract it. I will not tire you with the detail of my ſufferings and his attention, it is enough to obſerve that he cured me, and that my arm became again fit to ſerve my country and friends.

Upon the concluſion of the laſt peace, I returned to Paris, and thanked my friend whoſe kind pre-

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caution had probably ſaved my life; we lived together in the moſt agreeable intimacy—The morning in his work-ſhop—the evening in the midſt of his family.—His wife at her harpſichord, and the fair Caroline cultivating her ripening talents through her brother's inſtruction and example.

Around the harpſichord a group of artiſts, men of letters, and ſubſtantial citizens, and the friends of Carlo, liſtened with rapture to that new ſtile of muſic of which Madame Vanloo firſt taught us to underſtand and taſte the beauties—and in this circle Carlo pointed out to me Pecome, the friend of his heart, and whoſe ſon appeared extremely touched by the fine voice of Caroline. In this manner did we paſs our time.

The exhibition of pictures was that year uncommonly excellent, my friend Vanloo's pieces were particularly diſtinguiſhed by the dignity of his manner, and the brilliancy of his colouring;—but envy only became the more envenomed.

I have heard that glory and envy were born on the ſame day—the one from the egg of an eagle, the other from that of a viper. I am inclined to think ſo, and I can conceive that the artiſt that crawls

crawls is jealous of him that ſoars—but the man who is but an artiſt himſelf, how can he become envious? In matters of wit every man has more or leſs pretenſion—he has made, perhaps, in the courſe of his life, a madrigal or a ſong; and that is enough to make him the enemy even of Voltaire. Monteſquieu after all only wrote proſe. M. de Jourdaine has done the ſame, but without a man's having handled the chiſel or the pencil, how can he be hurt at the reputation of the ſtatuary or the painter? It is becauſe there is a deſcription of men who are naturally enemies to all kinds of excellence; ſucceſs in others afflicts them; they are hurt at every kind of merit; they would obſcure the ſun itſelf were they able to ſully its luſtre.

Among theſe was one Rudricour, a bravo, well known at the theatres and coffee-houſes for a petulant and troubleſome fellow. He piqued himſelf on being the ſcourge of artiſts, and he would ſtrut about the exhibition room, his glaſs in his hand, and praiſe in the moſt arrogant manner what every other perſon decried, and find fault with what others commended. He had conceived a particular malice againſt Carlo Vanloo, the moſt modeſt of men, the moſt open to correction, and who would deface

deface the work before him, if a learner even of the art appeared diſſatisfied with it.

"Do you know," ſaid Carlo, one day to me, "why that man is ſo incenſed againſt me? He frequented my houſe a year ago, and was as complaiſant and cringing as he is now *ſpiteful and* ſevere, but in pretending to admire my talents, he was really the admirer of my daughter, and he had one day the inſolence to ſlip a *billet* into her hand. The poor girl ſhewed us the note, and aſked her mother and myſelf what the gentleman wanted. I perceived plainly enough that he wanted to ſeduce her, and without condeſcending to reproach him, I deſired our amateur never to enter my houſe again.—He has never forgiven me." In vain I ſtrove to make my friend Carlo conſider ſuch kind of wretches with the contempt they deſerve. "Alas!" replied he, "they were your Rudricours that broke the heart of Le Moine." However, as Carlo had the public voice in his favour, and his labours had even been crowned with ſucceſs, I at length made him ſenſible of this advantage, and he became a little more calm.

But one morning when I called at his houſe, I found the beſt picture he had exhibited torn into

pieces, and his wife and daughter ſtanding by it, in the moſt diſconſolate manner.

Struck with aſtoniſhment and grief at what I ſaw, I aſked the ladies what madman had been deſtroying ſo fine a production?—"Alas!" replied the mother, "'twas my huſband."—"He is out of his ſenſes then?"—"Paſſion has made him ſo," replied ſhe, "nor do I wonder at it; this unfortunate picture will perhaps be the occaſion of the death of an old and worthy friend. You know Pacome; you have ſeen him at our houſe. Ah, M. Driſac, a *man of fifty years of age, father of a family*, was affronted in the moſt inſolent manner yeſterday in a coffee-houſe by a wretch called Rudricour, who abuſed my huſband's works and his talents, not even ſparing perſonal inſult, but accuſing him of unbounded pride, and of low and undermining hatred for every one of his own profeſſion that ſurpaſſed him in excellence.

Pacome had born with temper the ſeverity of this man's remarks reſpecting his friend's production's; but when the ſlanderer had recourſe to perſonal inſult, he defied him to point out a ſingle fact, or to produce any evidence in ſupport of his calumny. The word calumny touched the ſlanderer to the quick.

quick.—"Here is an evidence," cried he, threatening at the ſame time to ſtrike him. Pacome being unarmed could not then avenge the inſult, but on his return home, his wife and children endeavoured in vain to reſtrain his reſentment, and to prevent his determining on vengeance or death. His ſon is reſolved to die before him; but this is not all, my huſband conſiders it incumbent on himſelf to revenge the inſult offered his friend, and at this moment is charging his piſtols. Overcome with paſſion, he will not ſuffer us to appear in his preſence, nor ſee us again till the affront is done away."

On hearing this unpleaſant recital, the idea of Bagieux came ſtrongly into my mind. I went directly to Vanloo and compelled him to open the door of his cabinet, and ſeeing him in the act of loading his piſtols—"What are you about?" ſaid I, "are you not ſenſible that this vile fellow is unworthy your notice, and that it is enough to conſign him to public indignation and contempt."—"No, M. Driſac," ſaid he, "if he were a coward, well and good, but ſince with all the vileneſs of his character, he has the reputation of being courageous, I will ſee whether he be as brave as he is inſolent and cruel."

As he pronounced theſe words, we ſaw Rudricour paſs by in his way to the exhibition, carrying his head very high, with an inſulting countenance, his hat over his eyes, and a long ſword by his ſide. —"There he goes," ſaid Carlo, "I will wait for him here till his return, and you will be my ſecond."

I had little more dependence upon the piſtols of Carlo than on Pacome's ſword, but there was no reſtraining a man under the influence of rage and reſentment. He intreated me to let him go out, and in ſuch a manner that I could not oppoſe him. I appeared to yield, and contented myſelf with following him. But what a ſcene did I behold on his coming out of the cabinet, what a picture! and how like one of his own painting. His wife, his charming daughter, one at his feet, the other hanging about his neck, endeavoured to reſtrain him with their embraces, their cries, their tears, and with their expoſtulations which nature dictated and which pierced the heart. Carlo was inſenſible to all their efforts. "*My friend*," cried he, "my friend is diſhonoured, I muſt revenge him or die in the attempt;" and he tore himſelf from their arms. His wife fell into a ſwoon; his tender and feeble child ſtill hung about him. She had ſeen the piſtols concealed under his coat, and getting over the timidity

timidity of her age and ſex, ſhe endeavoured, as a laſt reſource, to diſarm him. "What are you doing, my child," ſaid he, "they are charged, and if one of them goes off, you will kill your father?"—ſhe fell down without colour or motion.

"My brave Carlo," ſaid I, "you have the feelings of a man of honour and courage, one cannot deny it; but you are going to act like a bravado, if you attack your adverſary as he comes out of the exhibition room; it will appear as if you expected to be ſeparated by the bye-ſtanders. Will you give me leave to conduct you in a quiet manner to ſome place where you will be more at eaſe?"—"Yes," ſaid he, with great ſatisfaction, "'tis what I wiſh."—"Stay then where you are, till you ſee us go by, and then follow us; and in the mean while conſole the two ladies.—I ſhall go to the exhibition."

I went thither and quickly marked my man in the crowd, his glaſs at his right eye, looking over the pictures and depreciating the beſt of them in the moſt inſolent manner, to the great ſcandal of three young artiſts, who were obſerving him, and were much exaſperated at his impudence. I drew near and ſtood behind him, the better to hear and to join in the converſation. I heard him exclaim

on the ſubject of a picture of Virnet's; "Fit only for a fan-mount!" I exclaimed, "What beauty! what truth of colouring! were ever ſky, water, air, and light better expreſſed?" He ſurveyed me from head to foot, and ſtepping on, and examining a piece of *Deſhaie's*, he obſerved, "'Twas art without talent?" I replied, "It was pure genius."—He looked at a picture of *Vien's*, and cried, "'Tis the work of a learner!" and I anſwered, "Of a learner who rivals the greateſt maſters."—He turned towards one of Lagrenee's pieces, "It is cold and manner'd?" ſaid he.—"Yes," replied I, "cold as Albano, and manner'd as Correggio." At laſt perperceiving the vacant frame of Vanloo's picture, "He has done well," ſaid he, ſmiling, "to remove it. There was never any thing ſo inſipid!"—"He has done ill," replied I, "there was never any thing ſo ſublime."

My replies enraged him, he looked at me a ſecond time over his ſhoulder, and ſaid, "How troubleſome it is to be near a fool!"—I anſwered, "How tormenting it is to meet with a coxcomb!" He then turned about, and taking me for a young artiſt, gave me a fillip on the noſe. I did not move a ſtep, and without making any diſturbance I put my hat upon my head: "Sir," ſaid I, "you ſee this

this cockade?"—"Yes, I ſee it."—"And therefore!"—"And therefore!" replied he, mimicking my manner of ſpeaking. "Gentlemen," ſaid I to the three artiſts, who ſeemed aſtoniſhed at my calmneſs, "will you walk with me; I generally take a little air in the morning in the *Champs Elyſees*; it gives me an appetite to my dinner."—"I go there too ſometimes," replied my man, "for exerciſe does me good."—At this inſtant I ſet out with my young people, who ſeemed not a little exaſperated againſt my adverſary.

Vanloo waited for me in the way: "Well," ſaid he, "where is our man?"—"He is following us; let us go to the Champ Elyſees."—As they walked along, Vanloo informed the artiſts of Pacome's adventure, but he was totally unacquainted with mine. I requeſted them not to ſay a word about it.

Rudricour haſtened to the ſpot, and we perceived him making up towards us along another walk, but Pacome and his ſon, who had certainly been watching his motions, followed him at a little diſtance, their hats on their head, and their ſwords at their ſide. Mercy on us! 'twas for the firſt time in their lives.—"Ah!" ſaid Carlo to me, on ſeeing them,

"rid

"rid me of theſe two men, they are going to get themſelves killed." We immediately joined them.

"Softly, Gentlemen," ſaid I, when we were altogether: "Each perſon has his own quarrel to ſettle, for with your good leave, I have alſo mine, and our common adverſary ſhall begin with me, if you will allow it."—"You, ſir," cried Carlo, "you are no more than a ſecond; I perceive your intention, and feel the obligation, but do not carry it any farther, and be aſſured, that without your kind interpoſition, we ſhall be able to do away the injury."—"Your injury! very well," replied I, "but mine!"—"Yours!"—"Aye, my fillip on the noſe!"——"Is it you who have received it; is it you that muſt revenge it?" He did not underſtand me: I explained the matter. Carlo appeared unwilling to believe it, but I had my three witneſſes at hand. "It was not on your account, but on my own that I requeſted this worthy man to take a walk here; and ſince I invited him, it is my duty to receive him. I ſhall not be long about the matter, and in a few minutes I will turn him over to you alive or dead."

Rudricour was out of all patience. "Excuſe me," ſaid I, making up to him. "I have loſt a few minutes; but theſe gentlemen diſputed the precedency.

cy with me. I was under the neceſſity of ſhewing them that it was my right; they have given it up, and I am now entirely at your ſervice."

"I perceive," ſaid he, with an inſulting ſmile, "that I have more than one affair in hand this morning, but let us diſpatch yours."

He then drew a ſword of an ell long, and I likewiſe drew mine which was of the uſual length; it was yet a maiden one, for I had never done more than ſport with my foils.

We began by playing with our blades, as if it were to provoke each other; when, all on a ſudden he made a dreadful lunge at me, which threatened to pierce me through and through. Happily my blade turned off the thruſt, and while he was lengthening his arm, and myſelf parrying the thruſt, the point of my ſword met his right eye and pierced it. The pain he felt ſeemed to be exceſſive, for he inſtantly turned pale, and letting fall his ſword, ſupported himſelf by leaning againſt a tree.

My friends, who thought him mortally wounded, were running up to him: "Don't be alarmed, ſaid I, "he is alive, he has only loſt his bad eye;

I have

I have yet a few things to say, then taking up his sword, I made up to him. "You appear to have had enough," said I, "and as far as it relates to me, I am satisfied. But here is a worthy man whom you have cruelly and wantonly offended. You must ask his pardon, if you please, and lay your sword at his feet." Upon this, he looked at me furiously with his left eye, and replied, "that he would make no such concession; that he was now defenceless, and that I might kill him if I chose it."—"I will not kill you," said I, "but if you persist in refusing to make so just and so moderate a reparation, you are unworthy of seeing at all, and I desire you'll stand upon your defence, for I am going to pierce the other eye, and to conduct you to the * *Quinze Vingts*." He then thought fit to comply, and my good friend Carlo, with the two Pacomes, were touched with *compassion when they* received the wretch's sword presented to them by him in so pitious a condition. The three young artists were not so compassionate, and recollecting the fastidious manner with which he looked with his right eye through the glass at the pictures; "that eye," cried they, "will never more insult the works of genius. ——"God has punished the offending part."

"Would

* An hospital in Paris for the blind.

"Would you have a farther inſtance of the equity of Providence," ſaid I. "Know then, that Carlo once ſaved me this arm which has avenged his own and his friends wrongs." I related my adventure at Laufeld, and they were delighted at the recital. "You ſee," they cried, "a good action is never thrown away!"

Thus engaged in converſation we came near the Louvre, full of the pleaſing idea of bearing conſolation to two diſtracted families.

Suddenly a guard arreſted me, and told me to follow him. Some one had certainly ſeen the affray and had betrayed us. "Don't be alarmed," ſaid my three companions, "we are your evidence;" *and they accompanied me to the priſon.*

Carlo and the two Pacomes, though more frightened than I was, would have accompanied me likewiſe; but I intreated them not to interfere at all in the affair, aſſured them that I ſhould eaſily extricate myſelf, and begged them to leave me, and haſten to comfort the ladies.

The three witneſſes were heard, and I myſelf underwent an examination; and as the whole matter

appeared

appeared nothing more than an inſult, a *rencontre*, a chaſtiſement of inſolence, the officer charged with the enquiry, aſſured me that it ſhould ſoon be brought to an iſſue.

I was now immured in a priſon, with my heart overcharged with inexpreſſible joy.

I had obliged Pacome to receive and keep the ſword that Rudricour had laid at his feet. It was a ſufficient teſtimony of his honour. Carlo was reſtored to his anxious wife and child. My imagination painted the happy ſcene on his arrival; and although in the midſt of a priſon, I felt a more ſincere delight than I had ever before experienced.

"I believe ſo," ſaid Juliet, "but I will wager that you were ſtill more delighted when you ſaw the two families come to your priſon, and perceived how happy they were to have owed to you the ſafety of thoſe whom of all others they held moſt dear."

You are right, young lady; there never was a more engaging ſpectacle than this. They came to me, and in this abode of crimes, of ſhame, of remorſe, and of ſorrow, I ſeemed as if I was in Paradiſe. The tender and charming Caroline embraced me

me with tears of joy and gratitude; and this was not the higheſt gratification I experienced on that occaſion. Her mother—ah! the eyes of her mother! you ſhould have ſeen them to have had any idea of their expreſſion! and her friend, the wife of Pacome, and his two daughters! there is no colouring that can do juſtice to ſuch a group.—O bleſſed fillip, ſaid I to myſelf, if I had not received thee, I could not have imagined that felicity could be carried to ſuch an extreme. I embraced them all pell-mell, and I wept like a child.

I then began to quiet their alarms reſpecting my ſituation; and when they were all compoſed,—— "M. Driſac," ſaid Carlo, "you have certainly been ſeeking a quarrel, with a view of revenging our injuries."—"My friend," replied I, "*if it were ſo*, you know this arm belongs to you; it was you that ſaved it, and in juſtice it ſhould have been uſed in your ſervice; but I have been inſulted myſelf; and for no other reaſon than having done juſtice to merit; for having applauded talents of which Rudricour ſpoke with inſolent contempt.—However, he is now corrected, and it is to be hoped, if he looks again on the works of genius, it will not be with the ſame eye."

You may imagine that upon leaving me Carlo was aſſiduous to haſten my enlargement. He had friends: they exerted themſelves; and the next day Marſhal N—— ſent for me to his houſe. I related ingenuouſly every thing that had happened, except the rendezvous, which was proper to conceal.

"You are a brave young man, and a real friend," replied the generous old man. "I ſhall take care of you." And he made his words good, for to his friendſhip I owe all my promotion. But the friendſhip of the two families pleaſed me more than all fortune's favours. All the young children loved me with a parental affection; and their parents again, regarded me as their own ſon.

THE DIVORCE.

TALE NINTH.

"I HAVE ſome trifling adventures to tell," ſaid Madame Norlis; "but I am reſtrained by a certain ſcruple. Is it poſſible, after an interval of twenty-five years, to ſpeak of one's ſelf in the ſame advantageous manner as of another perſon? It is a point in caſuiſtry that I muſt refer to our *Cure* for ſolution."

tion."—"At ſo great a *diſtance, as it were, from* one's ſelf, one is ſo little the ſame perſon," replied the good man, "that ſelf-love has not much to do in the matter. Have not I related all I had to ſay in favour of my youthful days?"—"I ſhall then," replied ſhe, "do the ſame."

I was born in a country in which the bonds of marriage are not indiſſoluble; and where a divorce may take place on the free and mutual conſent of each party. However, as inconſtancy made no part of my character, and the very idea of ever meeting the man, who, after having been the half of myſelf, ſhould no longer be any thing to me, hurt my feelings to ſuch a degree that I exerted all the reflection my age was capable of in the determination of choice. And I did not ſo much examine whether the man propoſed to me was ſuited to my inclination, as whether I myſelf was capable of captivating and fully poſſeſſing his heart.

M. Norlis appeared to have a mind, that, with a little attention on my part, would become ſuſceptible of the ſentiments I imagined I was able to inſpire. He looked on me with pleaſure, liſtened to me with complaiſance, was delighted with the ſimple and unaffected turn of my ideas, and often con-

deſcended to conſult me; and, reſpecting every purſuit fitted to our time of life, our taſtes and opinion were the ſame. Thus did my fondeſt hope, that of making him happy, encreaſe every day; and to ſpeak the truth, that ſentiment was encouraged, by the happy deluſion moſt people are under, in hoping what they moſt wiſh to happen. I loved without knowing that I was in love. Norlis then, among my different ſuitors, had the preference; and five years peaceful and happy union made me ſincerely bleſs the day in which I gave him my hand.

Two children, a boy, the image of his father, and a girl, which he declared he loved by predilection, becauſe ſhe reſembled me, cemented our union, and I thought I was as ſure of my huſband as of myſelf, when on a ſudden he changed, grew cold, neglected me, and began to abandon his once-loved family. I concealed my grief, but endeavoured to find out the cauſe of his altered behaviour; and I learnt that he was paying his court to a young widow, whoſe prudence I heard well ſpoken of, but whoſe attractions gave me the juſteſt alarm.

Madame de Velbac was rather pretty than handſome. Her pleaſing irregularity of features, and

ſtill

ſtill more her bewitching turn of mind and diſpoſition, had enchanted my inconſtant huſband.

To every natural attraction of youth ſhe joined an art, which to me was entirely unknown, the art of ſporting at will with the hopes and deſires ſhe inſpired. Modeſt and ſevere in her principles, ſhe would declare that the man who ſhould preſume to count upon her weakneſs would be a fool; that although ſhe had loved and lamented her huſband, ſhe had not taken the reſolution of dying faithful to his ſhade, that at her age it would be madneſs to lay herſelf under ſuch reſtraint; and that ſhe did not hold ſuch kind of virtue in ſufficient eſtimation to be any ways ambitious of it; that ſhe was deſirous it ſhould be known that her heart was free, and that ſhe could again diſpoſe of it, but that ſhe ſet too great a value upon her liberty to be induced eaſily to give it up.

My huſband's fortune and ſituation in life would have ſuited her ſufficiently to make her envy my lot; but this envy, whether it was too ſlight, or elſe too dexterous to expoſe itſelf, let nothing appear in the young widow's heart but a certain pride and jealouſy of independence, and a ſeverity of virtue, over which no arts of ſeduction could ever triumph.

At laſt, when ſhe was well aſſured of her aſcendency, ſhe thus addreſſed Norlis, (for I have been informed of every thing ſince) "You muſt be out of your ſenſes to talk to me of love.—You! the huſband of an amiable and virtuous woman, do you conſider me as leſs eſtimable than ſhe is? and are you not afraid of becoming deſpicable in my eyes, by your paying that homage to me which is another's due, and which ſhe ſo highly deſerves?"

He bluſhed, acknowledged his folly and error, and avowed himſelf to be unjuſt.—"But," ſaid he, (as ſay all faithleſs men) "who can command his heart?"—"I can command mine," ſaid Madame de Velbac; "and in ſuch a manner too that I am confident it will never be influenced by a paſſion that is not juſtifiable and praiſe-worthy. I will, for inſtance, ſuppoſe you, Norlis, poſſeſſed of every accompliſhment of perſon and mind that could render you amiable in my eyes,—a ſingle circumſtance would ſpoil all. You have a wife. After that, unite in your own perſon the wit of Ovid, and the heart of Tibullus, the beauty, the gallantry, the accompliſhments of Alcibiades, and you would be no more formidable to me than the fool that tires me, or the inſipid languiſhing gallant that inſpires nothing but diſguſt."

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In this manner paſſed their *tete-a-tetes*; but in public, and in his preſence, ſhe would let fall certain maxims, which ſerved him as leſſons and advice, and which revived in his heart the hope her private converſations diſcouraged. The praiſe of divorce, the temerity of a perpetual and irrevocable engagement, the fooliſh obſtinacy of tiring, and of being troubleſome to each other, after one has ceaſed to love; the deceit of man and wife, who mutually cheat each other by falſe appearances of tenderneſs; the apology, *in fine, of that change of* condition which ought of courſe to be expected, and which, being involuntary, becomes perfectly innocent after mutual declaration."—Such were the topics ſhe would often touch upon; but ſometimes ſhe would ſpeak in a firmer tone. "It is incumbent upon two minds united in marriage," ſhe would ſay, "to treat each other with the fulleſt ſincerity; and that, of all kinds of hypocriſy, the moſt odious is that of love. I am aware that modeſty in a woman will juſtify a little diſſimulation; but falſeneſs in a man is mere baſeneſs; and it is an homage on the part of a man due to the beauty, the virtue and the innocent credulity of a woman no longer beloved, to acknowledge himſelf to be unworthy of her, and to reſtore her that liberty, for the ſacrifice of which ſhe is no longer rewarded."

Theſe

Theſe leſſons were treaſured up in my huſband's mind as ſo many oracles; and the concluſion he drew from them was, that he ſhould be both unhappy and culpable until he ſhould have entirely removed the illuſion I laboured under, by laying before me the real ſtate of his heart. From that time he began to think of a divorce; but not being ſufficiently cruel, or ſo determinedly unjuſt as to propoſe ſuch a meaſure to me, he was deſirous of leading me on to make the propoſal myſelf. Fortunately I had been informed of Madame de Velbac's converſations, and I was aware of the tendency of them. Collected in myſelf, and alone with my children, I examined my own ſtrength, my reaſon, my courage, and, above all, my heart, for it was neceſſary that I ſhould be right there.

"I am no longer beloved," ſaid I weeping, "and, what is ſtill more cruel, he whom I love, and with whom I am united, loves another.——Being no ſtranger to his inconſtancy, it is in my power to break theſe chains which are ſo troubleſome to him. But can I conſent to do it? Can I conſent that the law ſhould divide between us, like ſpoils, the fruits of a ſacred union? That they ſhould be deprived, the one of a father, the other of a mother, and both of them, perhaps, become ſlighted and neglected

glected by a jealous ſtep-mother? No, my children," cried I, embracing them both, "I will never conſent to it; it is you that ſtrengthen the ſacred ties that bind your father and me together, and with my conſent they ſhall never be broken. I ſhould then indeed make you orphans. I ſhall perhaps have much to undergo; but it would be for your ſakes, and the ſight of you will always ſoften my ſorrow. I ſhould be unnatural if I ſuffered ſelf-love to triumph over maternal affection."

My huſband, in the mean time, was anxious of finding an occaſion to rid himſelf of the reproach he felt at deceiving me, and he availed himſelf of a moment in which my heart by effuſion of tenderneſs was endeavouring to re-animate his.

"Is it true, then," ſaid he coldly, "that you ſtill love me?"—"Can you aſk me that queſtion? and are you not well convinced of it?"—"What, are you ſtill the ſame, and do you love me as much as ever?"—"Yes, the ſame, and with ſuch affection, that I have no other deſire in the world, but to pleaſe, and make you happy."—"O! as for the deſire of making me happy, I can have no doubt of it; but I confeſs that the more I obſerve what paſſes in my own mind, the more I feel it difficult to believe

believe in a paſſion, that five years happineſs has not weakened."

"It is natural enough," ſaid I to him, "that your affection ſhould not have retained the unalterable equability of mine, for nothing that is very violent, is laſting; but as it is now more moderate it will be more conſtant, and will not loſe any of its charms and value in my eſtimation."

He did not go on with the ſubject—but one day, as I obſerved him to be very thoughtful, I aſked him the reaſon of it. "What anſwer can I make you? I am diſſatisfied with myſelf—for I am not an unjuſt man, and I feel that I ought never to have changed my ſentiments."——I ſtrove by my indulgence to ſoften, both in reſpect to himſelf and me, the pain this confeſſion occaſioned.

"O, no, Madam! young and handſome as you are," ſaid he with impatience, "you deſerve ſentiments far different from thoſe ariſing from mere friendſhip." Theſe words touched me to the heart, but repreſſing my tears, which were ready to ſtart from my eyes, I cried, "O, continue that pure and tender ſentiment of friendſhip for me, and it will conſole me under the loſs of your love!—After having

ving been adored, I ſhall be then only cheriſhed—but is not that ſufficient if it be laſting.—The illuſions of love are, alas! but tranſitory dreams.—It is a ſoft and tender ſentiment, unalterable and as durable as life that I require from my huſband—and love is not of that deſcription."

"Love," replied he, "has never been contented with ſuch an exchange, and you yourſelf love me but little, if you could pardon me for loving you in ſuch a manner."

"I love you," ſaid I, "more than my life, and as much as I poſſibly can love—of this I am very ſenſible—let others analiſe ſentiments they do not poſſeſs—I give myſelf up to thoſe I feel—they make me happy, I glory in them, and I would cheriſh them even if they became my torment.—Beſides, I have much dependence on the goodneſs of your heart—you will never be ſo unjuſt as to refuſe me your eſteem, never ſo cruel as to deny me that tender good-will, which cannot but be beſtowed upon one who exiſts only for you—and that will ſatisfy me."

"But," replied he, "a diſſipated huſband can no longer make you happy, and I foreſee that a ſolitary

litary life will become very tireſome to you." "Do not give yourſelf any uneaſineſs on that head," anſwered I, in the kindeſt manner, "my children will amuſe me, they will engage my cares and attention. And then, my books, my houſehold affairs, your idea, and yourſelf ſometimes, my dear friend—I wiſh for nothing more."

He appeared confuſed and loſt in thought, and after a few minutes ſilence, "What contrariety," ſaid he, "what caprice of nature! why ought not one to love moſt, what is moſt the object of our eſteem." After theſe words he went out of the room, and I called my children to me.

Fixed and ſilent with grief, I gazed upon their countenances, and their ſweet looks ſeemed to heal the wounds of my heart. I then obſerved their amuſements and their innocent joy; "That joy," ſaid I, weeping, "ſhall be mine. I ſhall yet at leaſt be happy in their happineſs."

Whilſt I thus ſolaced myſelf with ſuch reflections, accompanied with tears that gave me relief, my huſband repaired to my rival to get rid of the uneaſineſs our late interview had given him.——"At laſt," ſaid he, "I am no longer guilty of diſſimulation

tion towards a moſt eſtimable woman. I have juſt confeſſed to her that I no longer love her."—— "What was her reply to theſe kind words?"—— "That ſhe would be ſatisfied with mere friendſhip." —"Very well; ſhe looked for ſuch a declaration, and her ſedate and proud mind could not deign to be moved at it. Certainly five years of love and happineſs may well furniſh the mind with a ſufficient degree of philoſophy to render it in ſome meaſure unmoved at the indifference of a huſband. And beſides, an elevated rank, children, a conſiderable fortune, the opulence of a houſe where ſhe commands as a ſovereign, all contribute to bear her up againſt the diſappointments of love. Yet your preſent ſituation together is rather aukward. What a dull *tete-a-tete!* and what ſtrange parts you are about to act!"

"Oh! no," replied he, "after having once broken the charm all hopes of good intelligence are loſt. It would be, both to one and the other, the changing of an enchanted palace into a frightful deſart. When things are carried thus far a divorce is inevitable."

"Indeed," replied Madame de Velbac, "it ſhould have already taken place, had it been my caſe. Juſt

Heaven! a huſband declares to her face that he loves his wife no longer! After ſuch a piece of blaſphemy you muſt either inſtantly quit the temple of Hymen or be expoſed to the reſentment of a deity who never pardons, and whoſe vengeance is terrible."

As ſoon as the young widow learnt that I perceived myſelf to be neglected and forſaken, ſhe had the goodneſs to be the means of providing me comforters. A myſterious report among her aſſociates announced my approaching divorce; and at the ſame time the praiſes beſtowed upon my perſon and diſpoſition, excited wiſhes to ſucceed the huſband I was going to be ſeparated from. I had many pretenders, and I perceived them eagerly attentive to pleaſe me, before I was even aware of their intentions.

Among theſe was an Engliſhman of a noble and engaging countenance, and of a melancholy turn of mind, which was extremely intereſting, as it was ſtrongly tempered with truth and candour. His name was Lord Altmon; he got himſelf introduced to me, and viſited me oftener than I could have wiſhed; he obſerved me much, ſpake but little, and ſeemed very deſirous of finding an opportunity of having a *tete-a-tete* with me.

One

One day he found me alone. "Madam," ſaid he, "ſincerity is a quality in women which I hold in the higheſt eſteem; and I believe you are poſſeſſed of it. Speak then with frankneſs, What is your idea of me? Do not you find me very gloomy and very *ſtupid?*"—"Certainly not ſtupid," ſaid I, "but a little gloomy, I muſt confeſs."—"Do you know the reaſon of it?" ſaid he, "It is becauſe I ſee nothing in this world that attaches me to life. My heart languiſhes and fades like a plant deprived of its root; my family is extinct, and I am left young and alone. I love my country, and would ſhed my blood in its ſervice; but I cannot bear to live in it. I aſcribed this *ennui* to the nature of the climate. I ſought a purer ſun-ſhine, and a more kindly ſky. I enjoyed them for a while; but, I know not how, their luſtre was ſoon over-clouded. Alas, I fear the cloud is my own ſoul. The cold that affects it condenſes the maſs of vapours that ſurround it." I recollect theſe expreſſions, their novelty ſtruck me.

"And what," ſaid I, "has nothing during the age of pleaſures, been able to cure this indifference?" "The gratifications of benevolence," replied he, "have ſometimes intereſted and affected me.—But theſe gratifications are only momentary. When

one has done good, one ſoon forgets it.—The pleaſures ariſing from vanity always appeared to me to be no better than the ſports of children—thoſe of avarice are only pardonable in old age, and thoſe of ambition coſt more than they are worth—I deſpiſe falſe glory—true glory is rare, and too dear for my acquiſition. The eſteem of others is neceſſary; I feel that it is ſo, but it does not greatly flatter me—It is like the air I breathe, a want without gratification.——As for the fanciful purſuits which riches create in a mind ſick with ſatiety and languor, I have tried their efficacy in vain.—I could never congratulate myſelf upon the ſwiftneſs of my race horſes.—My melancholy ideas took off from the beauty of my gardens, and deprived my lawns of their verdure.—After collecting maſter-pieces of painting and ſculpture, and having only coldly admired their excellence, I conſigned them to the inſpection of others.—I do not ſpeak of ſuch purſuits as are degraded by the venality of their objects.—Nothing that was vile could ever find its way to my heart." "And friendſhip," ſaid I to him.—"Ah, friendſhip! I have found it," ſaid he, "in books; but theſe very books ſpeak of it as a phœnix—they ſpeak too, of the charms of love,—as to them I believe they may exiſt; but the deſire of giving way to ſuch a paſſion is extinguiſhed by the want of aliment.

ment. And how can one dare to love, when one is conſcious of not being amiable?"—"A man becomes ſo," ſaid I, "by the mere deſire of pleaſing."—"Yes, madam, but ſuch deſires ſhould be fed by hope; and that hope which alone would reconcile me to life, I have never poſſeſſed, and am now farther from poſſeſſing it than ever."—At theſe words he caſt his eyes upon the ground.

"I would adviſe you," ſaid I, "not to be diſcouraged; you poſſeſs every quality that can inſpire in the breaſt of an amiable and virtuous woman, an inclination which you will ſhare with her. Love will re-animate that heart the warmth of which you imagine to be extinguiſhed; and when to the name of huſband you add that of father, you will find your attachment to the world renewed by the tendereſt of all ties and connexions."

"Alas!" cried he, "'tis all I wiſh! 'tis the object of my higheſt ambition! But how ſhall I indulge the charming hope? 'Tis you alone that can realize it."—"I, My Lord!"—"Yes, Madam; you alone. I know that you and M. Norlis are ſhortly to be ſeparated. I know it from good authority; and this information induced me to aſpire to the happineſs of ſucceeding him. I am no adept in

gallantry. I am unacquainted with the art of giving a graceful turn to a declaration of love; but of all women in the world it is you I prefer; and of all women it is you I am moſt ambitious to render happy. I have ten thouſand pounds a year to lay at your feet, and a heart which never loved before, and which can never love any other but yourſelf. Does my propoſal meet your approbation?"

"My Lord," ſaid I, "I am much flattered by your offers; but be aſſured you have been impoſed upon by thoſe who have repreſented to you that I am going to be divorced, I never yet had any ſuch intention; and I hope too that my huſband has not."

"O, Madam, as for M. Norlis," ſaid he, "I am certain he has ſome thoughts of it, and I believe too that he has made ſome preliminary engagements with Madame de Velbac. However, all I aſk is an eventual preference; and, if the divorce does not take place, I withdraw my pretenſions."

I wiſhed to know where he had heard of my divorce. "It was at Madame de Velbac's," ſaid he, "that I heard it; and I thought you were upon very good terms with that lady, for ſhe ſpeaks of you, madam, with juſt praiſe.—"Happy," ſaid ſhe,

"will

"will be the husband that is truly sensible of the value of possessing you." "And accordingly you see that her friends are eager to offer their hands, and contend for the honour of your choice."

I assured Lord Altmon that the story of my divorce was a mere fable; and he and my other suitors were politely dismissed.

The Englishman complained to Madame de Velbac that he had been imposed upon; and he assured her that nothing was further from my thoughts than the imaginary divorce.

"See," said she, in a jeering manner to Norlis, "how you are going to regain your liberty! No, Sir, I predicted it. When a captive like you is held in chains, he is not allowed to break them and to escape. You are, it seems, condemned to love for ever."

I perceived him growing daily more pensive and gloomy. "Is it true," said he, "that you have touched the worthy Lord Altmon's heart, and that you may, if you please, cure his melancholy?"— "Such cures," replied I, "are not to be effected by a woman of a disposition so equal, so quiet, and so simple

ſimple as mine. To kindle a flame in a frozen heart would be a prodigy in the art of pleaſing; and if I poſſeſſed the power, I ſhould not exert it to captivate Lord Altmon."—"If this man," ſaid he, "but once loved you, he would ever remain your ſlave."—"Yes," replied I, "I believe ſo; and happy will be the woman whom he ſhall love."—"He poſſeſſes great wealth."—"I know it."—"He is a Peer of England."——"That is likewiſe a great advantage."—"He is young, well made, a man of unſhaken probity, and of a ſweet and noble diſpoſition, and I cannot conceive how ſuch a man can be diſdained." "Certainly," replied I, "he will never be diſdained; and I fancy I now ſee the woman who will be proud of making a conqueſt of him. She poſſeſſes all the arts of captivating, and is adorned with all the powers of pleaſing. She is lively, attractive, can rouſe up deſires by exciting fear, and can create attention by jealouſies. She is formed on purpoſe to relieve my Lord Altmon's languor, and I think her worthy of him."—"And who," ſaid he, "is this refined coquette?"—"Oh! that is the ſecret of my penetration. When my Lord marries her I will tell you it is ſhe; till then I muſt leave you, if you pleaſe, to gueſs at it."

"Do

"Do you not perceive," ſaid Madame de Velbac," as my huſband related this converſation to her, "that this portrait was meant for me?"

"Well, ſir, ſince ſhe entertains ſuch an idea of the power of my artifices, it would be right to ſhew her that ſhe is not miſtaken. As long as ſhe conſiders your heart diſengaged it is very natural ſhe ſhould hope to regain its affections: But you ſhould deſtroy this hope; and if it be true that ſhe has a beloved rival, it is neceſſary that ſhe ſhould know it: She is too eſtimable not to deſerve ſuch an avowal. You owe it to her, and you owe it to yourſelf."—"And, madam, will you permit me to name her rival?"—"Juſt as you pleaſe, ſir. But no, I am not yet ſure enough of you, nor perhaps of myſelf," added ſhe, laughing; "one don't know, I may perhaps, even this evening, or to-morrow meet with a man more captivating, more dangerous than yourſelf; a Lord Altmon, for inſtance. Believe me, ſir, don't name me till you ſee me at the altar."

My huſband came in, and found me engaged in teaching my daughter her leſſon.—"Come," ſaid I to him, "hear her a little, how well ſhe begins to read, and give her a kiſs for her recompence." He kiſſed

kiſſed the child, and I perceived a tear gliſten in his eye.

During the leſſon he threw himſelf into an arm-chair; roſe up, walked about the room with haſty ſtrides, and appeared to be in great agitation of mind. He then ſuddenly left the room, and retired to his cloſet. At length, after much conflict with himſelf repaired to my rival, and confeſſed that he was too weak, and too intimidated to be able to ſpeak to me without diſguiſe."—"I pity you," ſaid ſhe; "and I ſee that I muſt aſſiſt you, or you will never come to any explanation."

An anonymous letter, as from one of my friends, was that morning put into the hands of Paulette, my faithful waiting-maid. I received it, and read the following words:

"Should Madame de Norlis be thus betrayed and abandoned? Is ſhe ignorant, or does ſhe diſſemble her knowledge of her huſband's inconſtancy? With a heart taken up with another paſſion, can he ſtill impoſe upon her? or elſe has ſhe ſo little pride and courage as not to dare to emancipate herſelf from ſuch bonds?"

I had

I had no doubt but that this note came from my rival; and, as it was calculated to provoke a decisive resolution, I was unwilling not to avail myself of it.

"Norlis," said I, looking at my *husband*, "we make people jealous. Here, read what I have received from some one of my goods *friends*." He read it, and, affecting to be surprised, "What think you," said he, "*of this piece of officious advice?*"—"You may perceive what I think of it, by the manner in which I lay the matter before you."—"You don't believe then that my heart can be capable of infidelity?"—"I do not believe it possible."—"And if it were true?" said he, fixing his eyes on mine.—"If it were true I would compassionate you."—"And you would give me up?"—"Oh! no."—"But after my crime!"——"That crime would be an error, and I should pardon it."—"'Tis too much," said he, rising up; "and if you have constancy enough to be unhappy with me, I have not enough to suffer you to be so, and to be at the same time the witness of it, as well as the cause."

"You do not know then," said I, "that from the due discharge of our duty, we find no small consolation under unmerited afflictions? The mere title

of

of father of my children gives you an unalterable right to my tenderneſs; and your conduct cannot force me to renounce it. Being united to you, I ſhould neither allow myſelf to hate you under misfortune, nor to abandon you if ſick. You would be both the one and the other under the influence of a wild paſſion. It would, however, be a dilirium of which I ſhould wait for the cure, and, in the mean while, I ſhould do all in my power to haſten your recovery."—"I ſhould be then the object of your pity."—"Rather ſay of my compaſſion, and of ſuch a kind as a child feels for her father, when ſhe watches over him on his bed of ſickneſs."——"It is a ſentiment which your huſband does not require from you. His indiſpoſition, if he labours under any, is not a tranſient attack." I was ſilent.]

"Tell me," ſaid he, "by what means, you received this note."——"It was put into Paulette's hands, and I had it from her."—"This Paulette is meddling with every thing, and you have already perceived that I am diſpleaſed with her. I beg you will rid me of her preſence." He ſpake theſe words in a rough manner, and he went out of the room without waiting my anſwer, and ſeemingly oppreſſed by the effort he had juſt made to appear unjuſt and

and cruel. I was at this moment as much agitated and overcome as himſelf.

After what I had ſuffered from my huſband's conduct, it was no great ſacrifice for me to diſmiſs this poor girl, and yet it was an incident I was ſcarcely able to bear. "Is that my huſband?" ſaid I. "What! is that the man who was once ſo indulgent, ſo tender and ſo kind? To what a wretched condition has this unhappy paſſion brought him."

I ſent for Paulette; and as ſhe was uſed to bring in my children to me, ſhe came in leading them by the hands. I ſtood in need of comfort, and I began careſſing them, for it was only by preſſing them againſt my heart that I felt my fortitude and courage revive. At length, when my reſolution was a little fortified. "Paulette," ſaid I, "you know I wiſh you well. You have ſerved me with zealous fidelity, and I have nothing to ſay but in your favour; but my good girl, I muſt diſcharge you from my ſervice. Do not aſk me the reaſon, I ſhall find you another place, and in the mean while I ſhall take care of you."

Paulette, all aſtoniſhed and trembling, had not power to make any reply, and ſuddenly *burſting*

into tears, threw herſelf at my feet. My two children ſeeing her diſtracted ſituation, ſcreamed out, and fell down upon her. I was never more affected in my life. "What have I done," cried ſhe at laſt. "O my dear lady, I would give up my life for your ſake! Heaven is my witneſs that I lived only for you, and you diſcharge me! Unhappy creature that I am, what have I been guilty of?"—"O of nothing!" continued ſhe, "nothing!"——"I am innocent, and yet you are forced to diſmiſs me, there are people that take a pleaſure in giving you pain. I perceive it but too plainly. Ah my dear madam, they would willingly break your heart."

Alarmed and confuſed at her penetration, I impoſed ſilence upon her. "By all the friendſhip I feel for you," ſaid I to her, "and which I ſhall ever feel, I forbid you Paulette, to hold ſuch language, and if a word of this kind eſcape you again, I ſhall deſpiſe and hate you as much as I have heretofore loved you. Go, without making any further complaint."

My huſband ſaw her go away like a criminal, her eyes covered with a veil, and her mouth with a hankerchief to ſuppreſs her ſobbing. He could not bear the ſight, and ſtarting back like a man overwhelmed

whelmed with ſhame and remorſe, he exclaimed; "Am I ſo unjuſt, ſo cruel, ſo inhuman? and is ſhe ſo ſubmiſſive and ſo patient? There is a girl that never gave me any offence, that has affectionately ſerved her miſtreſs, and by whom ſhe is much beloved. I wiſhed to have her diſmiſſed and ſhe is inſtantly turned away. My wife unhappily for me muſt poſſeſs the virtue of an angel, and this heart which ought to adore her, muſt be formed of ice with reſpect to her and of fire for another, who moſt aſſuredly does not reſemble her. Inconceivable folly! thus to be both capricious and depraved! yet, muſt I be unhappy with her? I could condemn myſelf to it, if I alone were to be the ſufferer. But on her part, what irkſomeneſs, what tears, what bitter complainings has ſhe not to encounter. Alas! the more ſhe would be eſtimable in my eyes, the more would ſhe render me odious in my own! 'Tis a ſituation truly horrible, and how ſhall I extricate myſelf from it. I cannot have recourſe to unworthy meaſures; no, I never ſhall be capable of that!" —It was in this manner that he unboſomed himſelf to Madame de Velbac.

"As to unworthy meaſures," cried ſhe, "who would think of having recourſe to them? I ſhould hate you if you were even wanting in reſpect and

attention for your wife. To become indeed tireſome, troubleſome, and unpleaſant in order to get free, may be admiſſible, if you pleaſe, both in a huſband and a lover, but nothing beyond it."—— "Ah! thoſe expedients," ſaid he with a deep ſigh, "are already exhauſted."—"I do not believe it," ſaid ſhe, "and for the honour of my ſex, I am perſuaded that you did not go about it as you ought.—Madame de Norlis would never have ſuffered a declaration on the part of her huſband, that her rival was adored by him. I muſt hear it myſelf before I can give any credit to it."

"You ſhall hear it, if you pleaſe," ſaid he to her, "I wiſh you to be a witneſs to the unavailing efforts I am making to emancipate myſelf."

The propoſal made her thoughtful for a moment. —"Well," ſaid ſhe, "be it ſo. Make us acquainted, and I will anſwer for it, that if I can have an unconſtrained converſation with her, I will ſoon bring about your diſmiſſion."

"I am going to give a ſupper," ſaid my huſband one day to me——"We ſhall have women in the party. I will name ſuch as you will have the complaiſance to invite by cards. Among this number

will

will be Madame de Velbac. She is a woman of the firſt faſhion, very amiable, and greatly eſteemed. You will have the goodneſs to give her a kind reception."

The humiliating idea of being compelled to careſs my rival made me ſhudder and turn pale. But when I was left alone, I experienced a conflict which I cannot recollect without aſtoniſhment.

The thoughts of being in the preſence of an enemy, and the neceſſity of either degrading myſelf, or of riſing ſuperior both to her and to myſelf, preſented an alternative that inſpired me with a force which I did not think myſelf capable of exerting. I made up my mind on the occaſion, and after having diſpatched the cards of invitation, I calmly waited Madame de Velbac's viſit.

Nothing could be more eaſy and compoſed than her addreſs; nothing more natural and polite than my manner of receiving her; and the repaſt, the converſation that followed it, in a word, the whole interview both on my part and her's was carried on with perfect decorum, only with this difference, that Madame de Velbac aſſumed a certain inſinuating manner, and that eaſy coquetry which ſhe

played off even among women, whilſt my deportment was marked with gentleneſs, with ſerenity, with flattering attentions, and with an air of reſerve and predominance that was ſuited to my ſituation, and which pointed out her's. She was aware of it, and ſhe endeavoured by the eaſe of her manners, by her vivacity, and by the brilliancy of her air and converſation to out-do me. I ſmiled at her accompliſhments, I praiſed them, I applauded her, but juſt as I ſhould admire from my box, an actreſs who ſhould be playing for my amuſement.

My huſband, diſſatisfied at the inferiority into which I had thrown my rival, endeavoured to raiſe her from it by marked attentions. I appeared not to perceive this, and directed my attentions towards the other ladies whom my huſband had very unbecomingly neglected. The affability of my looks, more than that of my words, diſplayed that certain delicacy of ſentiment, imperceptible ſometimes to men, but which is never loſt upon any of my own ſex. I was therefore perſuaded, that if ſucceſs ariſing from vanity diſtinguiſhed her triumphs, the glory derived from benevolence and from eſteem would diſtinguiſh mine; for at leaſt I had this advantage over her, that my reſerve did not excite envy;

envy; while her ſplendour never failed to mortify thoſe whom ſhe ſurpaſſed.

As to the men, I was under no farther concern than merely to diſoblige them, being well convinced they would be of the ſame opinion with the women, on ſuch points of compariſon as were worthy my emulation.

Whether the firſt impreſſions which Madame de Velbac had conceived of my diſpoſition, had diſcouraged her from pretending to eclipſe me in my own houſe, or that the arts of inſinuation ſeemed more likely to bring about her purpoſe, ſhe addreſſed me with the moſt engaging affability; and without meeting her advances with equal ardour, I nevertheleſs by no means rejected them.

Two days afterwards ſhe came to ſee me. I had a few other viſitors at my houſe, and the warmth of a new and encreaſing friendſhip on her part, and on mine, the appearance of wiſhing to cultivate it gave the company an idea that I was ignorant of my huſband's attachment to her. The converſation then turned in a free manner upon the news of the day. The divorce of a certain Madame de l'Yeuſe was the topic, and every one was aſſiduous

ous to applaud the ſpirit of that young woman, who finding herſelf betrayed and abandoned, had taken her reſolution to be free. "I can pardon her," ſaid I, "ſhe has no children."—"And if ſhe had," replied Madame de Velbac, "would not her reſolution be not only pardonable but even praiſe-worthy?"—"One can ſee, madam," ſaid I, "that you are not a mother.—You can have no idea how trifling the little diſappointments of ſelf-love and of vanity are in compariſon with maternal affection."

"Children certainly have their claims upon us," replied ſhe, "and without being a mother, I feel one may bear much for their ſakes. But a woman ſhould not ſuffer herſelf to be contradicted, betrayed and humiliated inceſſantly; an evil which is to laſt for life, and which is felt every moment, is more than human conſtancy can bear." Then pretending to relate Madame l'Yeuſe's ſtory, ſhe touched upon mine in ſuch a manner as wounded me to the heart. "*At laſt,*" *ſaid ſhe,* "*only conceive* a huſband, who in order to irritate his wife, introduces her rival to her in her own houſe, obliges her to give her a good reception, and before her face laviſhes upon this lady all the attentions of love."

"Well,"

"Well," ſaid I without being moved, "if ſhe had thrown a veil over her huſband's errors, and by concealing them had taught her friends likewiſe not to notice them, the evil would not be of long duration. The wiſdom of her conduct would perhaps ſoon reclaim him; for there are but few that are inſenſible to the force of virtuous perſeverance; and even if the ill proved remedileſs, ſhe would at leaſt have the public eſteem in her favour, which would tend to reconcile her to her fate, while humiliation always awaits thoſe who deſerve it."

She appeared hurt at theſe words: "People," ſaid ſhe, "conſole themſelves as well as they can, but whatever they may ſay on the occaſion, humiliation muſt certainly be the lot of the abandoned woman, who has not courage enough to ſcreen herſelf from contempt. On ſaying this, ſhe went away with an air of triumph; and above all, well pleaſed at leaving a poiſoned dart in my heart.

I was reſolved not to give her any advantage over me, and perceiving that I ſhould either be forced into a quarrel with her, or be daily agonized with ſuch kind of ſcenes, I determined to counteract both theſe projects. Madame de Velbac ſoon gave me a favourable

a favourable opportunity. I went to return her visit, and I found her alone.

"I was impatient, madam," said she, "to have the pleasure of seeing you. I have been guilty of an involuntary offence, and I feel it incumbent on me to justify myself. I took up the cause of young Madam de l'Yeuse, the other day, in your presence, with rather too much warmth. I have since learnt in what manner it offended you, and I ask your pardon." "For what, madam? and what can have been said?"—"Alas! that you yourself are in a similar situation, and that M. de Norlis——" Stop, madam," said I, with a correcting but imposing spiritedness of manner; "there are certain things which one cannot hear but from particular friends, and I have not yet the happiness of being upon that footing with you; nevertheless I am willing to hear what you have to say; but first of all do me the favour to listen to me."

Norlis is in fact a worthy and an excellent man. Five years of intimacy, of confidence, and of neglect, have only taught me to esteem and love him still more; and it is impossible for me not to perceive that nature has formed him for a true and sure friend, an indulgent husband, a good father; in a word,

word, he is, of all other men, the man I would ſtill prefer, were my choice ſtill to be made. That he ſhould be infallible, or proof againſt the ſeductions of wit and beauty, is more than can be expected from him, or from any other man of his time of life. The firſt of the virtues of our ſex is ſeldom in the number of thoſe of the other. It is thus that opinion will have it, and let us not be more ſevere; and, believe me, theſe crimes of love, which are ſo unpardonable in the eyes of a young miſtreſs, are conſidered with more lenity by an indulgent wife, and eſpecially by a good mother. Admitting then that M. Norlis has all thoſe faults which are aſcribed to M. de l'Yeuſe, it would be my duty to endeavour, by my care, my tenderneſs, my complaiſance, and by every means of pleaſing him, to draw him out of the ſnare in which he had fallen. Now, madam, tell me, is he accuſed of this?

"Yes, madam; and they add, what I can hardly believe, that his error is irretrievable."—

"Pardon me," ſaid I, "you may think ſo; but I do not. If the woman who has ſeduced him were virtuous enough to make him deſpair of ſucceſs, even if ſhe had your charms, madam, he would not love her long. Nor would he love her long if ſhe ſhould ceaſe to be eſtimable."

"Madam,"

"Madam," replied ſhe with warmth, "a divorce might be obtained, and Norlis might have promiſed it."——"He has then promiſed an impoſſibility," ſaid I, ſmiling; "for it depends upon my conſent, and I will never ſubmit to it."—"And if he aſks you?"—"I will refuſe him."—"I have a two-fold courage to ſupport me in my reſolution, that of a wife, and that of a mother; and neither I truſt will forſake me."—"How, madam! can you bear negligence, coldneſs, forgetfulneſs, deſertion? Ah, whatever you may ſay, it is too bitter, too humiliating to be borne."—"I would bear it, however, and bear it without ſhame. Virtue can never be degraded. It is ſhe who abaſes all that aim at her humiliation."—"But, madam, if he is unhappy with you?"—"Well, we will be ſo together; but not long, I hope; and we ſhall find happineſs in friendſhip."

"But if it be true, as it is reported, that he is paſſionately fond of another woman?"

"Yes, madam, it is true that he loves a charming woman, endowed with every perſonal and mental attraction. But why all this equivocation? Yes, madam, 'tis you he loves, I know it, and I forgive him; but I declare to you, that during my life Norlis

lis ſhall never become your huſband. It is certainly in his power to render me unhappy a thouſand ways, but I will ſuffer in ſilence. Such is my deſtiny, and I will fulfil it."

"Since you are ſo well acquainted with the affair," ſaid ſhe, "I have nothing more to conceal from you. It is true that he adores me: I have not been able to cure him of this fooliſh paſſion. If you oppoſe it he muſt, however, give it up. We ſhall ſoon drive him to deſpair. But why do you perſiſt in your endeavours to retain a heart which can be no longer your's? A thouſand others will be at your ſervice, and, amiable as you are——"

I then aroſe—"I am but little ſenſible," ſaid I, "to the conſolation you give me. I perſiſt, as you ſay, in being the wife of Norlis, becauſe I am a mother, and the mother of his children. Theſe two relations in which I ſtand, I conſider as moſt ſacred; they ſhall both be indelible; they ſhall both be inſcribed upon my tomb."

I perceived ſhe was moved at theſe words; and ſhe ſuddenly caught hold of my hands, and preſſing them between her's, ſhe kiſſed them with a tranſport, which, as you may well imagine, aſtoniſhed

me exceedingly. "Ah, Madam," cried ſhe, "how irreſiſtible is the aſcendency of virtue, and how weak are all the vanities of life, when compared to it!"

She went to Norlis. "Return, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "to the arms of an incomparable woman. Love her, or at leaſt live for her alone. I at length know her; and, in truth, although I am not wanting in ſelf-eſteem, yet I am compelled to acknowledge that I am greatly her inferior."

Norlis returned confuſed, and under great depreſſion of mind. He ſhut himſelf up in his cloſet for ſome hours; and, after much reflection, he came into my room, where he found me alone. "Madam," ſaid he, "liſten to me. My heart is full, it is oppreſſed, it ſuffers extremely, and I muſt unburthen it." Then making a confeſſion of all the injuries I had ſuffered, and which I have related to you, "Such are my faults," ſaid he, "and as I have confeſſed, I will expiate them. I reſtore you a heart ſenſible and aſhamed of its errors, and overflowing with tenderneſs and eſteem. I dare not add more. You would not believe me; but for the reſt of my life I ſwear——"

"Ah!

"Ah! my dear friend," ſaid I, throwing myſelf into his arms, "hear me. I will call ſome witneſſes, who will anſwer for your vows." I rang the bell and called for my children. "It is by them," ſaid I, "taking them both in my arms, that we ought mutually to vow to forget the paſt, and to afford them examples of goodneſs, of tenderneſs, and faithfulneſs." He made the vow with great emotion, and ſeemed to feel inexpreſſible relief of heart.—You may judge whether in this moment I felt myſelf happy.

After this every thing was changed. My faithful Paulette was recalled, my houſe became more peaceful and agreeable than ever, and I thought I perceived daily that love revived in the heart of Norlis; and if this was an illuſion, at leaſt it continued to the lateſt moment of his life."

"And your Engliſhman, what became of him?" replied Juliet. "He likewiſe was happy. The widow availed herſelf of what I predicted. She ſoon inſpired him with a great deal of love, and a great deal of jealouſy, made him feel much impatience at her caprices, and a great deſire to poſſeſs her charms. And, after having cured him of his melancholy, ſhe gave him her hand, went to Eng-

land with him, and their happineſs was nearly as great as mine.

Thus did this intereſting converſation end.

"*Is it not obſervable,*" ſaid Madame de Verval, "that, among all the happy incidents of our lives which we have now been relating, all of them have been the fruit of a virtuous ſentiment, or the reward of a good action. How juſt is the adage, *that to be good is the high road to be happy.*

THE

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HONEST BRETON.

A Wealthy trader of Nantes, Plemer by name, a man of ſimple manners, ſomewhat blunt, with quick feelings, and much warmth of heart; in one word, *a true Breton* came to Paris about his buſineſs, and took a lodging at a ſmall hotel in a retired part of the city. He was a remarkable œconomiſt, yet by no means a miſer. Never had he experienced during any part of his life, any of thoſe wants which vanity dictates.

As he returned one evening to his lodging, he met, upon the ſtairs, an elderly woman who was coming down in tears. "What is the matter with you my good woman?" enquired he. She curteſied, but made no anſwer. "What ails you?—Speak. Nobody weeps without ſome cauſe of ſorrow."—— "Alas, Sir! in regard of ſorrow, I have had my own ſhare of it."—"And what is the cauſe? are you in diſtreſs?"—"No, ſir, I am not, thank God."—"You are not? then it is the diſtreſs of another that afflicts you."—"Ah, ſir! it is indeed."——

"And who is the perſon? come, explain yourſelf."—As ſhe perſiſted in her ſilence——"Open the door;" ſaid he, to his ſervant: "this woman provokes me; but I am reſolved to make her ſpeak. Come into my room, good woman; come, I ſay, we are by ourſelves; come, 'ſdeath! ſit you down, and tell me ſpeedily who you are; whence you come; and what is the cauſe of theſe tears."——"Sir, my name is Dupre; I am a widow; and I earn my bread by waiting on ſick perſons; I now attend a young man who lodges in this houſe, whoſe health is undermined by a lingering fever, and whom I find to be friendleſs."—"Who is this young man?"—"I do not know him."—"Do the people of this houſe know him?"—"I believe not. He fell ſick here."——"What is his name?"——"Montalde."—"Does he look like a decent man?"—"Yes, truly, ſir, and it is that which affects me. He is of ſo ſweet and kind a temper; he is conſtantly lamenting the trouble he gives me. He never awakens in the night without being vexed with himſelf, and aſking my pardon."——"You ſit up by him, then, every night?"—"O, ſir, certainly; and how could I neglect him? he has not another friend but me in the univerſe."—"Not even a phyſician?"—"He will not ſuffer me to call in one. And yet he perceives that he is in a declining way: and I really

really imagine he is glad of it." While ſhe uttered theſe words her tears increaſed. "Good woman," replied Plemer; "perhaps he may be in want?"—"Hitherto, ſir, he has wanted for nothing; but he has juſt ordered me to ſell his watch; it is all he has left: and we are indebted to our landlord for the laſt week's ſoups, and to the herboriſt for the herbs I have put into his diet-drink."—"And your own pains, your care, your attendance?"—"Alas, ſir! could I but ſave him, I ſhould conſider myſelf as well paid."—"Good woman! excellent woman! Here, take this for yourſelf, and this for the ſoups, and other exigencies of the ſick man. Let him ſuppoſe that his watch is ſold, and hark ye, take care of it for him."—"O, ſir!—"—"May I ſee him?"—"He does not ſee any one, ſir."—"Go, and tell him that a neighbour of his, a ſtranger in this country, wiſhes to ſee him for a moment."—"To-morrow, ſir, if you think proper."—"Oh, no! the nights are long—I ſhould not get reſt. I wiſh to ſee him ere I go to my bed. I like to ſleep undiſturbed."

The good woman delivered Plemer's meſſage, and came again to inform him, that ſhe had obtained permiſſion for him to enter the room with great difficulty.

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He aſcended to the third ſtory; and as he entered the ſick man's apartment——"Well, my good neighbour," ſaid he, "you are not diſpoſed to ſee your friends."—"My friends! alas, ſir! were I but ſo happy as to have one in the world."—"If what I hear ſaid of you be the truth," ſaid the Breton, "you deſerve to have many friends."—"Alas, ſir! I do not apprehend that I am even known to you."—"Pardon me, I know you are a worthy man; and as for my own part, I am of no ceremony, and ſoon make an acquaintance with the unhappy. Good night, my good neighbour; I will not fatigue you longer at preſent. Sleep quietly; and dream that you have found a friend in Plemer, the merchant of Nantes. Adieu. You have a good nurſe; if I ſhould happen to fall ſick myſelf, ſhe ſhall be my nurſe too."

Montalde could hardly believe what had juſt paſſed to be real: it ſeemed to him one of thoſe kind of illuſive dreams, which are ſent for the conſolation of the unhappy. He aſked his nurſe in what manner the ſtranger had learnt any thing about him.—"He is your neighbour," ſaid ſhe; "go to ſleep, and let me ſleep too."

He

He ſlept but little, yet his ſleep was compoſed and comfortable. In the morning his new friend came to ſee him. After enquiring how he had paſſed the night; "You will then have a phyſician?" ſaid he. "I had two," replied the young man, "Nature and Time: and now I have a third."—"And who is the third?"—"Friendſhip."——"I hope then," ſaid Plemer, "that you will follow his preſcriptions. My good woman, take care of your ſick charge; and let him want for nothing; his doctor orders it; he will return in the evening."

Montalde, after beſtowing great praiſe upon the goodneſs of heart of the worthy Breton, aſked his nurſe if ſhe had diſpoſed of his watch; and if his little debts were diſcharged. The good woman, availing herſelf of her authority, replied, that one in his ſituation ought to be like a child, and give himſelf no concern about any thing. "Let it ſuffice," ſaid ſhe, "to ſay that your debts are paid: compoſe yourſelf, and think only of your recovery."

The young man, fearful of offending her by ſhewing any uneaſineſs, no longer perſiſted in his enquiries. But at a moment when ſhe thought he was aſleep, he perceived her conſulting the watch to know the hour. "Every thing is paid," ſaid he,

"and

" and my watch is ſtill here, and you conceal it from me. Ah! I unravel the myſtery. You have diſcloſed more to my neighbour than you ought, and than *I could* have wiſhed."

The nurſe pretended not to hear him. But in the evening Plemer was made acquainted with the ſick man's uneaſineſs. " I will cure him of it," ſaid he; and ſitting down near his bed-ſide, and making a few ſevere obſervations upon the folly and variety of Pariſian luxury, and upon the miſerable pride of opulence; " Young man," ſaid he, " do you affix a great value to money?"——" A great value? no, ſir," replied he.—" Neither do I," anſwered the Breton. " And as I am not proud of *poſſeſſing wealth*, *I* am not pleaſed that my friend ſhould be aſhamed of wanting it, or of confeſſing his wants to me. Don't teaze this poor woman then, any longer with your idle delicacy; I am not your friend for nothing."—" Ah, ſir!" replied he, " I perceive it well; but how can I be ſufficiently grateful?"—" O, nothing more eaſy; if ever you have it in your power to oblige me, I'll promiſe you that you ſhall return me a good office. You ſhall be fully gratified; if not, you muſt do without; and we ſhall not be the leſs quit. You would be inclined to do me good; and is not wiſhing to do ſo, in fact doing

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it? Grateful hearts have no debts of gratitude unpaid. The pain arising from an obligation is only excuſable in an ungrateful diſpoſition."——"Certainly," ſaid the ſick man, "that is not my diſpoſition, and I ſhould abhor myſelf if I felt my heart oppreſſed by the weight of a benefaction. And I will confeſs to you that of all men you are the perſon from whom, could I make my choice, I would moſt willingly receive a favour. But ſtill, ſir, I ought to be ſurpriſed, that from the firſt moment of our acquaintance—"—Plemer interrupted him. "Hear me," ſaid he, "for a ſick man ſhould hear others ſpeak, and *ſpeak but little himſelf.* Suppoſe I was a Tartar, an Arab, an Hottentot, and finding a *fellow-creature in miſery*, I hold out my hand to aſſiſt him, is it neceſſary he ſhould aſk me who *I* am, to have a right to aſſiſt him? Are we ſo far from a ſtate of nature that a man cannot be a friend to another without he knows his name. As for you and myſelf, we are but little acquainted, yet we have a good opinion of each other. Let that idea ſatisfy us, and time will make us better acquainted. I, who read but little, have read in an old book, that in a certain country, I know not where, when a ſtranger came into a houſe he was well received, he was conducted to the bath; was cloathed if he ſtood in want of apparel; had a good ſupper and

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a good bed, and on the morrow, his hoſt would aſk his name, his country, his birth and his adventures; and then if they ſuited each other, they would give their hands and were afterwards friends for life; if not, it was good morning to you, and a good journey. The ſtranger was not the leſs benefited, and there was end of the matter. What do you think of this kind of politeneſs?——Well, ſuch is mine. Let me take care of you till you recover, and then we will come to an explanation. In the mean time compoſe yourſelf, and don't torment me with your difficulties. I have not laboured thirty years to acquire wealth, to be contradicted as to the manner in which I chuſe to employ it."

"This is truly," ſaid the young man, "a new manner of reconciling people to receiving favours."

The following day, Plemer announced a phyſician to the ſick man; he had juſt made an acquaintance with him by happening to dine together at the ſame table, and had already conceived a great eſteem for him.—"He eat," ſaid he, "with an appetite that made me envy him, and he drank to the full as well. I aſked him if his digeſtion was equal to his appetite?"—"Yes," replied he, "without loſing

loſing a mouthful."—"*If he ever was ill?*"—"No, never."—"What was his *recipe*, and what his *regimen?*"—"Exerciſe, and when neceſſary low living and water."—"What was his rule in medicine?"—"To obſerve nature, to let her go on when ſhe can without aſſiſtance, and when neceſſary to follow and help her."—"I ſpeak of your ſlow fever."—"At his age a ſlow fever!" ſaid he, "a diſappointment in fortune or in love!"—"This man is not a fool—I have brought him to you, and here he is." He came, and after examining the ſick man, and converſing a few moments with him, anſwered for his recovery.—"*Sir,*" *ſaid he to the good* Plemer, "this young man is indebted for his life to you, without you the ſtroke would have been mortal." The nurſe went after him to give him his fee, and Plemer obſerved that he refuſed to take any: "No, no, Sir," ſaid he, going up to him, "We are rich people here—there needs none of theſe ceremonies with us: keep that kindneſs for the poor."

"Now," ſaid he to Montalde, "I am eaſy; you will from this time ſee me but ſeldom. I am going about my buſineſs, but don't part with your watch; a ſick man, when he cannot ſleep, may like to know how the hours paſs away during the night."——"The night equally with the day," ſaid Montalde,

ſhall be the ſeaſon of my gratitude."—" Say rather that of your friendſhip."

The peace thus reſtored to the young man's mind, expanded its beneficent effects over his whole frame, and his fever decreaſing by degrees, at length quite left him, and gave place to the ſerenity of a a calm recovery.

At Montalde's time of life, nature is active, and ſoon renews her ſtrength, and Plemer had the pleaſure of ſeeing his young friend revive, like a flower watered by his hand when almoſt withered to death.

" Now let me know," ſaid he to him one day, after he ſaw that his health was perfectly reſtored, " by what wayward fortune a young man ſo well inclined and educated as you are, could have fallen into the ſituation in which I found you."

" I am young," anſwered Montalde, " yet the hiſtory of my misfortunes would be long, were I to enter into a full detail of them, and let me be never ſo brief I ſhall ſtill relate too many.

" I was born at the foot of Mont-d'-or in the moſt fertile country in the world. When I ſay it

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is the *Limagne d' Auvergne* I have ſaid ſufficient. No one is ignorant how luxuriantly fertile this beautiful country is. Yet by an unhappy contraſt, difficult to be accounted for, the greater number of the people of this fruitful province are poor, or in low circumſtances.

Of the laſt deſcription were my parents. I was notwithſtanding bred up with great care; and the conſtant view of nature in all its charms, on one ſide; the majeſtic aſpect of the mountains, on the other; the romantic view of our orchards, our hills crowned with vines, and the gay meadows below embelliſhed with fruit trees, where the cryſtal water from the ſources of the Roya comes winding along in a full ſtream; in ſhort, the labours, the pleaſures, and the manners of our country had made ſuch a lively impreſſion on my mind, that in contemplating them, I imagined I was born a poet. My eſſays were highly approved of by people not very critical in their judgments, and I confeſs I was far from thinking them to be too favourable. Giddy with praiſe, and placing all my hopes of fortune upon my natural abilities, I requeſted my father not to trouble himſelf about me in the diſpoſal of his fortune; my ſiſters were provided for with every advantage that the law would allow, and my father

dying ſhortly after theſe arrangements, I left my mother with them in the enjoyment of the little patrimony that fell to me, and which ſhe now poſſeſſes, reſerving to myſelf a ſum juſt enough to ſupport me at Paris during the ſhort time (as I thought) that it was neceſſary for me to live till I could begin my career.

Immediately after my arrival, I went to pay my reſpects to a man as celebrated for his goodneſs, as for his taſte and information, the ſage d'Alembert. I never knew a more true philoſopher; he had been one from his childhood. What nature had formed him, ſuch he appeared every day, and in every ſituation. In this great man, you could not perceive any thing borrowed, fictitious, or ſtudied. His little petulent humours, his ingenuous foibles, and his puerile anger, as his friends ſtiled it, were as freely diſplayed as his moſt ſublime ideas, or his firmeſt and moſt elevated ſentiments.

The frank and engaging reception he gave me inſpired me with confidence. I told him of the hopes I had been encouraged to entertain, and requeſting his opinion of the reality of them, I preſented him a copy of my works. "Do you mean," ſaid he, "that I ſhould tell you my ſentiments with ſtrict

ſtrict and unreſerved truth?"—"Yes, Sir," ſaid I with heſitation, "I do, it is the greateſt ſervice you can do me; I ſhall think it like thoſe remedies whoſe efficacy depends on their bitterneſs."——"Well," ſaid he, "then let us read."—We did ſo.—"Alas, ſir, how ſoon were all my illuſions diſſipated. Every thing that I looked upon as new in my pieces was common. All that I had delineated had before been deſcribed a thouſand times better. He ſhewed me my models and I felt myſelf annihilated. Perceiving my humiliation, in order to relieve me from it, he kindly took occaſion to ſay, that deſtitute as I had been of inſtruction and example, he was greatly ſurpriſed that inſtinct had ſo well led me on. But he bade me to conſider the fields of poetry as already reaped; and the beauties of imagination as a precious mine already exhauſted. "I do not poſitively affirm," ſaid he, "that in its depths there are not ſtill ſome veins in ſtore for the exertion of genius; but it requires much digging, and long labour, and I promiſe you that even after the moſt diligent ſtudy of art and nature, nothing is more doubtful, nor any thing more rare than the ſucceſs and profit of poetic talents."

"The ſervice you do me," ſaid I, "is great: the error was pleaſing, and the remedy as painful;

but, from henceforth, farewel to poetry. Yet if this means of diſtinguiſhing myſelf from the multitude, and of providing a maintenance be denied me, what is to become of me?"—"You are now," ſaid he, "as if you were at confeſſion." "May I with ſafety anſwer for your conduct?" I laid myſelf entirely open to him; nor did I conceal even the little faults of my youth. "Come," ſaid he, ſmiling, "there is not much harm in all this; but 'tis now your time to conſider whether you have reſolution ſufficient to ſacrifice ſome part of your liberty for the benefit of living peaceably at Paris, above want, and in a ſituation where you will be enabled to obſerve the world, and to form your taſte."

I readily ſubmitted to theſe conditions; and a few days after, was entruſted with the inſtruction of the Counteſs of Ventaumont's children.

In forming a plan for the education of my pupils, d'Alembert had the goodneſs to give me alſo ſome rules for my own conduct. In the houſe you are going to live in, familiarity with any perſon will be unbecoming; be careful therefore to avoid it. If others forget the dignity of your ſtation, do not be forgetful of it yourſelf, but make them feel it with a becoming pride. Modeſty, good-breeding, reſpectful

ſpectful behaviour where you are conſcious it is due from you; ſuch are the decorums of your ſituation. Do not forget you will have to deal with pride that you muſt neither depreſs nor flatter. Talk little, and hearken with attention. Preciſion, juſtneſs, and an eaſy turn of expreſſion, as of thought, are the true marks of a ſound mind; and a man with ſuch accompliſhments is well received every where. A man of wit is differently ſituated; he is often blamed and puniſhed for his very ſucceſſes.

For uttering the truth let it be in the language of a free, but modeſt man. There is a method of being ſincere without offending. Shun jeſting, and do not anſwer the jeſts of others but by a reſerved ſilence. It is a game that ſhould be engaged in upon equal terms, and it will not be ſo in regard to you. Do not aim at wit, it is a mark that people too often miſs; and of all pretenſions this when diſappointed is perhaps the moſt ridiculous. In a word, until your acquaintance with the world ſhall have taught you to converſe with elegance upon common or trifling ſubjects, indulge thoſe who ſpeak well in the pleaſure for which they will moſt thank you, that of giving them the hearing.

"You

"You are right," ſaid Plemer, "this d'Alembert was a ſenſible man. "But," ſays Montalde, "his inſtructions were uſeleſs; it was to no purpoſe that I followed them to the utmoſt of my power; in three months I was diſcarded.

The haughty behaviour of the Count made me ſenſible of the great diſtance I ought to keep from a man like him. He did indeed ſometimes honour me with a courteous *how are you?* but it was *en paſſant*, and without attending to my anſwer. However, one day, he condeſcended to enquire of me ſome particulars of his children's learning.

I pointed out to him the plan which D'Alembert had recommended to me.——"Let us inſpect it," ſaid he, looking it over, and a moment after he cried out, "What a loſs of time! Latin! of what uſe is it? Morality! that only can be acquired at court or in the great world! Metaphyſics! Ah! M. D'Alembert your deſcriptions, and ſolutions for ſuch children as mine! A little hiſtory is very proper, not that of countries, but of families. You ſhould let them have an abridgment of Moreri, by way of exerciſes. I would have them know diſtinctions, and, when occaſion offered, be able to give an account of people. As to the genealogy of my

own

own family, I would have them know it by heart, and never talk about it; for though they ſhould be taught to feel who they are, yet they ſhould not humble others. I have been reſerved myſelf, and I have found my account in it.

"What a coxcomb," exclaimed the Breton, "this Count was;" "and yet," returned Montalde, "it was eaſy to live with him in compariſon with the Counteſs; for, all vanity as he was, you had only to humour his foible and then you were well with him.

But it was impoſſible to know what the Counteſs was, or what ſhe wanted. From morning to night, from one hour to the next, ſhe was ever *in extremes.* Mild, gentle, familiar, lofty, arrogant, diſdainful, ſhe would one moment put on a rigid modeſty of deportment, and the next her pride would be unbounded. You would ſuppoſe her two diſtinct perſons." "Had ſhe been my wife," ſaid Plemer, "I ſhould have brought her to an equality of temper in a little time."

"Whenever ſhe appeared not to notice the ſuperiority of birth, I was careful not to ſeem entirely of her opinion," ſaid Montalde; "I would only allow, that in ſuch ſuperiorities there was more good

fortune

fortune than real merit, and that it was more rational to be pleaſed than proud of it.

On this ſhe would tell her woman to be attentive "Hear him," ſays ſhe, "it is a journeyman philoſopher that M. D'Alembert thought proper to recommend us to cure us of the ſin of pride." And a ſhort time afterwards ſhe was again, as it were, in the clouds, and would hardly vouchſafe to ſpeak to me.

I have often heard her ſay that in her opinion nothing was more fooliſh than praiſing people in their preſence. I did not want this advice to hinder me from hurting her delicacy, for I was as cautious of praiſing her as ſhe could have wiſhed. But I perceived ſhe was not ſatisfied when I did not continue to ſpeak and enhance the merits of what others ſaid in her favour, or which ſhe ſaid of herſelf.

She moſt aſſuredly diſlikes flattery, and every one knew it; but was I to think myſelf under the obligation for that reaſon to treat her with incivility? and is there no medium betwixt flattery and rudeneſs? and are there not certain delicate diſtinctions which I ought to have noticed, and to have availed myſelf of?

She

She was ſo incenſed one day, on reading one of her children's exerciſes, ſhe could not keep her temper. "Your country tutor," ſaid ſhe, to D'Alembert, "has no regard for any thing but old ſtories. He talks to my children about the mother of the Gracchi, without ſaying a word about their own, who, without vanity, is at leaſt her equal."

Her natal day came. She had heard that I was poetic; ſhe made no doubt of my having written ſomething on the preſent occaſion; and in the morning, when ſhe ſaw me come in with her children, as ſhe was at her toilette, ſhe drew herſelf up on her ſeat, and, without doubt, expected to hear us all repeat ſome fine panygerics. But how great was her ſurpriſe when her two children, kiſſing her hand, congratulated her on the day, as if ſhe had been a mere citizen's wife. Their congratulations were accompanied indeed with ſome expreſſions of tenderneſs, which their hearts dictated better than any muſe could have done.

And is this all you have taught my children to ſay to me on ſo particular an occaſion?"——"Nature, madam, has ſpoken, and art has not preſumed to interfere. And much leſs," added I, "has it dared to ſhew itſelf in my reſpectful homage." A

ſmile

ſmile of malevolence betrayed her ſpite. "Your reſpectful homage! nothing ſurely could be more new or better turned than that compliment—'Tis very well, indeed, ſir." From this hour, I perceived I had loſt her good opinion; and it was neceſſary that I ſhould think of making my retreat.

But as I lived with the Count, upon pretty good terms, he would not diſcharge me in a humiliating manner, but gave me a recommendation as ſecretary to his friend the Marquis of Fervac, who was going on an embaſſy. He preſented me to him, and I had the honour, on the firſt interview, to be appointed.

The Marquis was a young man, who was in poſſeſſion of all that natural and brilliant wit, which meets with ſuch ſucceſs in the world, but to which he had neither by ſtudy nor reflection ſcarcely ever added any thing. He diſliked ſerious reading, nor could he go on with a romance if a little long: he would turn over quickly to the *denouement*, impatient to find out whether the lover had drowned himſelf in deſpair, whether he had ſoftened the heart of his cruel fair one, or had cured himſelf of his paſſion."

Sometime

Sometime after I was ſettled with him, "M. Montalde," ſaid he, "we ſet off in three months, and I muſt learn by that time to talk learnedly about the ſubjects of theſe volumes and papers before us. Now, I declare to you, that I have neither inclination nor reſolution to read this heap of correſpondencies and negociations. Yet either you or I muſt get through it."—"It will be my taſk, ſir," ſaid I; "the conſequence is evident."—"Remember in making your extracts," added he, "the ſtory of the cook, who reduced the eſſence of ſix dozen hams into the compaſs of a ſmall phial. The diplomatic ſtile is compreſſible like air; in the compaſs of this ſmall pocket-book I wiſh to carry all theſe folio volumes about me. You will apply yourſelf to this during the day," ſaid he, "in the evening we will frequent the play-houſes, and you ſhall make one of my party at ſupper."

I undertook this taſk with ſo much the more ardour, as I perceived I ſhould become very uſeful to the Marquis; and as he promiſed to recompenſe my labours by making me the companion of his pleaſures.

He had ſelected from the dancers of the opera a miſtreſs who was very pretty, and equally amiable.

Her name was Emily. We ſupped every night at her houſe, with other girls of her profeſſion, and a ſelect party of young men. My little talent for poetry was found out I know not how; I was often intreated to recite my verſes, and was heard with that favourable air of politeneſs which induced me to think I afforded pleaſure. I will not deny that I was highly flattered by theſe little ſucceſſes.

The natural goodneſs of Emily induced her to diveſt herſelf in her acquaintance with me, of that ſeverity of a nymph of Diana, which ſerved to keep her train of ſuitors in awe; and as ſhe was ſure that I ſhould behave with reſpect to the object of my governour's adoration, ſhe deigned ſometimes to become familiar. Her companions imitated her. Thus did I ſometimes laugh with them in a corner at the grave and reſpectful behaviour that prevailed at the ſuppers.——"Surely you are not ſerious," ſaid Plemer. "Gravity, and reſpectful behaviour, with opera girls! And what was going forward there?"—"Witty diſcourſe, eaſy and delicate pleaſantry; ſometimes politics; and on my part, now and then, a little poetry—the epithalamium of two canary birds—a dialogue between two paroquets—or the triumph of Amelia in a *pas* ſhe had danced, and which had been applauded. Each of the young

young girls was aſpiring to the happineſs of being celebrated in her turn; and this conteſt led them to ſhew particular attentions. Apolline, the favourite of a young duke, a man extremely thin, very gloomy, much worn out by vicious conduct, and jealous in proportion as he had the leſs right to be ſo, was the lady that appeared the moſt attached to me. As ſhe was of a ſatirical turn ſhe was particularly happy when laughing with me at the follies of our little court. One time when the ſerious turn of the ſupper had tired her, "Do you know," ſaid ſhe to me, "that theſe gentlemen, who are ſo reſerved, and treat us with ſuch reſpect in the evening, are the moſt impertinent coxcombs among women of faſhion in the morning."

I enquired of her the cauſe of this ſingular contraſt. "The reaſon is plain," ſaid ſhe, "with us liberty is attainable only in the tete-a-tete; and it is there begun by billets ſigned by Love or by Fortune, whereas in the world—"——The Duke here interrupted her and addreſſing himſelf to me, aſked if I had any handſome things to ſay to them that day. "Yes," anſwered Apolline, "a very amuſing compoſition, upon the ſtupidity of jealous and tormenting lovers." The Duke looked ſour, and turned upon his heel.

"Why did you anſwer him in that manner," ſaid I to the giddy girl. "To learn him," ſaid ſhe, "to be leſs impertinent. Are you brought here only for the purpoſe of making verſes? Your poetic lyre is a favourite inſtrument, but the pleaſure of hearing it ſhould be leſs frequent to make it more deſireable. Talents like beauty loſe their value when diſplayed with prodigality, and there is a neceſſary coquetry for you which I ſhall teach you."

I replied, "that on the contrary I had ever thought that trifling accompliſhments were only valuable in proportion as we made no parade of them, and that readineſs in the diſplay of them conciliated indulgence." "Not the leaſt," ſaid ſhe, "you are conſidered as a perſon who is obliged to make himſelf agreeable. I am much hurt at it, I who love you, and ſee you give yourſelf over to the perfidious wheedling, which they beſtow upon you to bring you into humour." I returned her thanks, and promiſed to be more reſerved in future. "But your Duke," ſaid I, "is angry, and that makes me uneaſy."—"O, no, be quiet," ſaid ſhe, "I am like a ſportſman, that corrects his ſpaniel when he has committed a fault; but 'tis all in vain, he offends again even under the laſh. There don't you ſee that he is now about?—Congratulate me,

ſaid

ſaid ſhe to him; "I have made a conqueſt of M. Montalde; he does me the honour of dining with me to-morrow. You ſhall be of the party. He will recite his verſes upon the jealous lover."—— "No," replied the Duke, "I ſhall not have the pleaſure of hearing them;" and as he walked away he added: "I am ſick of verſe."

"Your pragmatical ſecretary takes it in his head to play the gallant," ſaid he to my ambaſſador, "and as I obſerve, endeavours to recommend himſelf by his verſes.—Tell him, I deſire you, not to be ſo attentive with regard to Apolline. I ſhall be diſſatisfied at it, and I ſhould be ſorry that any one whom you employ ſhould give me cauſe for diſpleaſure."

I had variety of invitations at ſupper to awaken my muſe, as they ſaid, out of that reverie which threw a damp upon their gaiety; but ſhe was inexorable.

As we went home together, the ambaſſador ſaid, "You have not been ſo agreeable and complaiſant as uſual; what has been the matter with you?—Some whim or other of a poet?"—"No one," ſaid I, "is always agreeable, and I do not conceive that I

am obliged at all times to be complaiſant."—"Tell the truth, you are in love?"—"In love, you are miſtaken, ſir." "I perceive, however, that you have taken much notice of, and are pleaſed with Apolline. But be adviſed, don't give way to your paſſion, the Duke will be diſpleaſed."—"That will not concern me," replied I. "You will do wrong then," rejoined he in a more ſerious tone. "The Duke is my friend, and I would not wiſh that he had any reaſon to complain of me." "Of you, ſir! You are not anſwerable for my actions? And what is there in common between your excellence and my acquaintance with Apolline?" "'Tis true," ſaid he, "but is it not I that take you there, and ſhould not I be the cauſe?"—"O, a very innocent cauſe!"—"However it may be, you will oblige me by not interfering with the pleaſures of my friends." "The way," ſaid I, "is very eaſy; it is to be no more of your ſupper parties; nor will I go to them again." "Why?" ſaid he. "Becauſe I conſider myſelf as henceforth out of my place in the circle of your amuſements."—"But you are, it appears to me, very well received there, however!"—— "Yes, as a witneſs, and to contribute to them; and this part does not at all ſuit my diſpoſition."—"You are proud, M. de Montalde!"—"A little, ſir." "But really would you have us be polite enough to permit

permit you to cajole our miſtreſſes?" "I ought ſir, to reſpect you in your's, but in her only. It is not that the others captivate me more; and although I am pleaſed with Apolline, yet I can prove, by not ſeeing her again, that ſhe holds no place in my heart. But I am reſolved to be free, and if I gave any other the authority to forbid whatever may give me pleaſure, I ſhould be no longer ſo. Let us, I deſire you, wave all further converſation on this point."

Without telling the reaſon, I wrote the next day to Apolline, and informed her that I could not have the honour of dining with her. But the Duke in the evening, in her box, had the folly to boaſt that it was he that had forbidden me to ſee her, without which I ſhould have been diſmiſſed from my office. —"Was it ſo," ſaid ſhe; "Well, I give you your diſmiſſion then," which ſhe did inſtantly. He attributed his diſgrace to me, and went in a rage to complain to the ambaſſador, who ſacrificed me to his reſentment.

"I hope," ſaid Plemer, "you went to ſee this good girl, this Apolline."—"No, I was afflicted, and entirely taken up with the thoughts of my ſituation, nor could I think of involving her in my ſorrows

and

and misfortunes. But in anſwer to the billet, ſhe had the goodneſs to write to inform me of the Duke's diſmiſſion, I acknowledged how highly I was ſenſible of her generous behaviour."—"Had I been in your place," ſaid Plemer, "I ſhould not have been ſo much maſter of myſelf; you were wiſer than ever I was in my life." "There is a reaſon, you have never felt the ſeverity of a next days reflexion," ſaid Montalde. "Misfortune is a great moraliſt, and at this inſtant I was more than ever in its ſchool."

They were now called to dinner. "Let us make haſte and finiſh it," ſaid the Breton, "I am impatient to learn what was now to happen to you."

Montalde reſumed the thread of his hiſtory, "you may ſuppoſe I had recourſe again to my kind friend d'Alembert. The recital of my misfortunes made him quite impatient, and he more than once interrupted me by the impulſe of his anger; now railing at that fooliſh pride, then againſt that ſtill more fooliſh vanity, which," ſaid he, "ſues for petty ſucceſſes, and is pleaſed with falſe praiſes. I for inſtance, what ſhould I go to theſe ſuppers for? Ought not I to be aware that I ſhould not be in my place there? But I am ſcolding you, and I take a proper

proper time for it. Excuſe me. Come here again in three days, and forget this affront.—I am going to ſee what I can do for you."

I called at the appointed time. "I have taken many uſeleſs ſteps," ſaid he, when he ſaw me, "but at laſt I believe I have pitched upon a good plan. Did not you ſay, that towards the end of your ſtudies you had made ſome progreſs in the law?"—— I anſwered in the affirmative. "Well, among the gentlemen of the long robe I am intimate with, is a great diſpatcher of cauſes. He is aſſiſted by an old ſecretary, to whom he wants to give a pupil, who in caſe of need may ſupply his place. I will propoſe you for this ſituation, the labour will be hard, but uſeful to you. In a little time you will have more legal information than moſt of our advocates; *without frequenting* the ſchools you will have taken your degrees; and if you perceive you have talents *for the bar you may* follow that profeſſion. I cloſed with the propoſal, and took new courage.

The perſon with whom I engaged, *Monſieur de* Ferbois, was a man of cool gravity, unalterable calmneſs of temper, and of ſuch ſedate apathy, that neither the good or evil of others could ever diſturb his

his quiet. He had two hundred law ſuits in hand in the year, and daily after having determined the fate of ſeveral families, enriching ſome, and ruining others, he would return home with as much tranquillity as if he had been only taking his pleaſure. "What would you have?" ſaid he one day at dinner. "It is the fate of law-ſuits to cauſe at the ſame time happineſs and miſery. One muſt accuſtom one's-ſelf to it. A judge is like a ſurgeon, and his hand would not be ſteady if he gave way too much to his feelings." I was ſtruck with this manner of arguing, and only concluded that I myſelf ſhould make a very bad judge.

The perſon I was placed under, M. Rapin, the ſecretary of this ſchool, was alſo endowed with an uncommon hardneſs of heart; but he added rudeneſs of manners to it; and that bluntneſs of humour and language, which he uſed towards the clients, he called integrity. I was deceived by it during two or three months.

The aſſiduity I ſhewed in the work which was impoſed upon me; my induſtry in the diſpatching of it, my diffidence, and my docility in ſubmitting it to his ſuperior judgment; the eaſe, and perhaps the benefit he derived from it, had gained me his

good-will

good-will, and from the little tokens of kindneſs with which M. Ferbois favoured me from time to time, I perceived that M. Rapin had ſpoken advantageouſly of me.

From a ſmall box, more or leſs full, the ſecretary took at ſtated times, what, as he ſaid, fell to my ſhare; and this ſmall reward ſatisfied me ſo well, that I found myſelf in very eaſy circumſtances. My chief concern was, that I ſometimes found, at the end of my extracts, that the concluſions of the *reporter* were not agreeable with thoſe that good ſenſe would have dictated. I complained of this to d'Alembert, who, upon hearing me made a wry face. I took occaſion to expreſs my ſurpriſe one day to Rapin.——"Why do you trouble yourſelf about the matter?" ſaid he abruptly. "When you have made your extracts from a ſuit, and given in your works to the Judge, your taſk is performed, and you ſhould think no more of it. Affairs have ſo many points of view, and the law ſo many different aſpects! And beſides what does it ſignify on which ſide the ſcale of juſtice preponderates? and what is the iſſue of a ſuit? Loſs or gain all comes to the ſame at the year's end, with regard to the public good; there is not a farthing loſs; and law-

ſuits

ſuits are, taking them in a right point of view, nothing elſe but a means of circulation."

My maſter's leſſons did no way edify me. This game of *heads and tails* upon the fate of cauſes, and this circulation of loſs and gain, which is the ſame thing, took away from the reſpect I always wiſhed to hold him in; but I ſoon afterwards knew much more of him.

Being confined with the gout, he was forced to truſt me for ſome time entirely by myſelf, in the midſt of the pleaders. He was uneaſy on the occaſion. Every day I duly gave him account of the buſineſs, and of the audiences I had given; but I found that he was under ſome kind of embaraſſment with me, for which he did not care to account.

Having one day looked over an extract of importance, which I preſented to him; "Very well," ſaid he; "but have you ſeen the parties?"—I replied that I had.—"Well!" "I heard them both with attention." "Well!" "They went away well pleaſed with my reception." "And is that all?"—"Yes, ſir, that is all; I intreated them to make themſelves eaſy, and that I would be ſure to expediate their affair as quick as poſſible." "As

quick

quick as poſſible! Why truly I am not ſurpriſed that each party went away ſatisfied. With this manner of treating them there would not be a——"

Here he ſuddenly ſtopped; and, after having conſidered for a few moments. "No;" ſaid he, "this buſineſs is in no hurry. Let us ſee; here is one that requires greater diſpatch. The pleaders for and againſt have deſired to ſee me. I ſhall ſend you to them. Hear them; promiſe them nothing; and do not put on ſo complying an air. You will inform me in what manner they conduct themſelves."

According to Rapin's deſire, I attended when they came; I liſtened to them patiently, but with reſerve, as he wiſhed. One of them, more anxious than the other at this cool reception, left upon the table a *rouleau* of gold, which I did not perceive before the client was already gone a good way off. —I took this for an affront, and I repaired to my gouty man to complain of my humiliation.

I perceived Rapin eyed me with a down-caſt look, and a ſneering ſmile, which was a very bad omen for me. "You are right to be offended," ſaid he, "this pleader is a fool, an impertinent fellow.

Leave me *this money*, and let him appear before me if he dare; I will treat him as he deſerves; I'll ſcold him with a vengeance!"—"At leaſt," ſaid I, "inform him that I did not perceive the inſult he offered me."—"I will not fail."—"That I ran after him."—"Very well!"—"That I called him back."—"Certainly."—"And that if I had known where he lived I ſhould have followed him, and thrown his infamous preſent at his head."—"I will tell him all."—"A man muſt be poſſeſſed of a baſe mind," continued I, "to ſuppoſe a judge's ſecretary could be capable of venality and corruption."——"Very true," ſaid Rapin, "it calls for puniſhment, and we are not of a diſpoſition to ſuffer ſuch offences. But leave me now, my fit is upon me, and I have no occaſion to heat my blood."

"I will wager," ſaid Plemer, "that he was making a fool of you, and that he kept the *rouleau* himſelf."

"Indeed," ſaid Montalde, "I had ſome ſuſpicion of it, and I meant to have enquired of the pleader if he had got his money back again; but Rapin, who did not wiſh ſuch explanations, was too quick for me, and prevented my enquiries. The next day, when I waited on M. de Ferbois, he received

received me with more than uſual affability and kindneſs. "M. Montalde," ſaid he, "I am well ſatisfied with your aſſiduity and your diligence, but you do not underſtand buſineſs. M. Rapin has not had time to form you: He is ill, and, in order to ſupply his place, I have occaſion for a perſon of more knowledge and experience than you can poſſeſs. I am very ſorry. I am pleaſed with your talents and your behaviour. Go, depend upon me. I ſhall patroniſe you, and give you the beſt character.

I departed without feeling any regret at not being any longer of this ſchool, but convinced, however, that my evil genius delighted in puſhing me back into an abyſs, as often as I endeavoured to get out of it.

"How," ſaid I, "am I now to extricate myſelf? behold, I am again fallen! Shall I return and importune the worthy D'Alembert, after he has exhauſted every means to ſerve me? No, it would be baſeneſs. Shall I take from my mother the little income I left her, become burdenſome to my ſiſters, and carry back to my native country the mortification of diſappointed hopes? No, I will ſooner ceaſe to live! But ſince I have now no reſource but to deſtroy myſelf, why not render this deſperate

courage of ſome uſe to my country? I have yet the honourable reſource of dying a ſoldier. I endeavoured to enliſt; but alas! on being meaſured I was found to be a quarter of an inch below the ſtandard.

Till now my height had been of the greateſt indifference to me. I had never entertained a thought upon the ſubject. But there are certain ſituations in life in which the ſmalleſt addition to our misfortunes will completely overwhelm us. The idea of being unfit even for a foot ſoldier, mortified and oppreſſed me to the heart. I perceived the gall which mixed with my blood diffuſe itſelf over my whole frame; and I felt the ſhivering of the ſlow fever in which you found me run through all my veins. I came, with the little money I had left, to this hotel, where I fell ſick, and deſired to have a nurſe. Providence ſent me this charitable woman, this worthy Dupre. It has ſince ſent me the beſt and moſt benevolent of men. Heaven will not ſuffer me to be always wretched.

"I will prevent," anſwered Plemer, "your being ſo any more, or we will be unfortunate together. I have been for ſome time looking out for a young man, who, at the head of my commercial affairs, ſhould

ſhould be, as it were, another ſelf; and you may if, you pleaſe, be that perſon.

Gratitude and joy ſo overcame Montalde, that he would have fallen at Plemer's feet, if he had not prevented him. "Oh! no tranſports," ſaid he, "I do not like them; they make a man look as if he was ſurpriſed, and I would not have any man be ſo at my doing a kind action. The air of Paris is not beneficial for either of us. My buſineſs is finiſhed here; I have taken leave of my friends; my chaiſe has room for two, let us ſet off to-morrow for Nantz. The good Dupre, your nurſe, ſhall come after us."

"I have only to entreat for time to inform my worthy friend D'Alembert, of my good fortune, and bid him farewel."

"We will go and ſee him together," ſaid Plemer, "I do not wiſh to go away without the pleaſure of ſeeing that man."

As Montalde approached, he ſtarted to ſee him. "Are you there," ſaid he, "I thought you had been drowned. What has become of you ſince M. de Ferbois diſcharged you?"

"I have been ill," ſaid Montalde, "and I did not dare ——"

"A fine piece of prudence truly, which puts a poor man to the torture! Have I deſerved that you ſhould make me a ſtranger to the ſituation into which you were fallen?"

Montalde related all that had happened to him.

"Ah! Sir," cried the philoſopher, and addreſſing himſelf to Plemer, "how uſeful a thing is riches in the hands of a beneficent man! From what a diſagreeable ſituation do you relieve me! This young man has made me more unhappy than himſelf. For theſe two months paſt he has ſpoiled my reſt, and I have been looking after him in vain. I aſſure you, Sir, I have reaſon to be very angry with you, and I only forgive you out of conſideration for this excellent man, who has the goodneſs to take a liking for you."

"I rejoice if I am good," ſays Plemer, "at having found a better man than myſelf; I did not think there was a better any where. Adieu, Sir, I ſhall ever remember your anger."

They

They took leave of each other like two old friends, and on the morrow Plemer and Montalde ſet off.

This journey completely re-eſtabliſhed Montalde's health. His ſoul was wrapped in a delicious ſtate of repoſe; his happineſs ſeemed like a dream to him; and the delightful views, on the fertile banks of the Loire, contributed ſtill to the enchantment.

"I give you notice," ſaid Plemer, "you are going to be tranſplanted into a new world, different from any thing you have been accuſtomed to. My account-books have no reſemblance at all to poetry; but you will, perhaps, find in them a kind of knowledge which will be equally intereſting to you. It is no ſmall matter to collect the wants, the produce, and the means of exchange of all the countries in the known world: and to calculate the hazards, the perils, the advantages of a commerce which is extended to every part of it. I hope that in theſe ſpeculations the head even of a poet will not want ſcope; and, if I am not miſtaken, this kind of buſineſs is more worthy of you than the jargon of chicanery or politics."

Conſidering

"Conſidering the ſituation from which you have relieved me," ſaid Montalde, "any employment by which I could honeſtly procure a maintenance would have been acceptable; but nothing in the world can make me ſo happy as to be attached for my life to the *man who has reſtored it to me.*"

On their arrival at Nantz, Montalde found new objects of eſteem and veneration. Plemer's houſe was the model of good order. His wife ſuperintended the houſehold affairs with native dignity, and with becoming vigilance. She had her eye upon every thing. Plemer gave himſelf no concern. His daughter, under the guidance of this virtuous mother, was charged with the more active part of the domeſtic œconomy.

This only child, whoſe name was Gabrielle, ſeemed never to have had leiſure enough to perceive that ſhe was handſome; neither her mirror nor her heart had yet informed her of it, although ſhe was eighteen years of age; and although her fine dark eyes, her ſoft features, her long eye-laſhes, her blooming complexion, her ſlender and graceful form, were all deſigned and modelled by the hand of love, Montalde was aware of it before herſelf, and this was the laſt and moſt ſevere trial his ill fate put him to.

Though-

Though in the midſt of the greateſt temptations he had been proof againſt every ſeduction, he now found himſelf robbed of his liberty by the looks of innocence; nor was his the only heart wounded by the inevitable dart which was in reſerve for him.

The good Plemer eager to inform his wife of his adventure, gave way, indiſcreetly, to the pleaſure of praiſing, (before his daughter,) the diſpoſition of Montalde; the goodneſs, the candour, the graces of his mind, the modeſt courage with which he had preferred misfortune to humiliation, and his delicacy and unalterable gentleneſs in the diſtreſs to which he was reduced between miſery and death.

The worthy Plemer was happy to obſerve the tears fall from his daughter's eyes, while he was ſpeaking, little thinking of the riſk the heart of the young girl ran in liſtening to him.

Theſe imprudent encomiums, more than the preſence of Montalde, made that firſt impreſſion upon the mind of Gabrielle which never was effaced. She received it without alarm. She was far from ſuſpecting in ſo delightful an emotion, the dangerous ſentiment that was blended with it unknown to her.

Nor

Nor did the delight *Montalde* experienced at the ſight of the innocent Gabrielle diſturb him; neither the ſweetneſs of her looks, *nor the charms of her voice*, nor the amiable ſimplicity of her manners, nor the negligent and captivating grace which accompanied all her actions, nothing in ſhort, in the daughter of his benefactor, appeared to him in a formidable point of view. He thought himſelf certain of always being able to look at her with the mere pleaſure which one feels in viewing whatever is perfect in the works of nature. But when he began to perceive that the ſound of her voice affected him, that he could not ſee her approach without a ſecret emotion, that he felt a thrilling in his veins whenever ſhe condeſcended to ſmile on him, that his words died away, as it were, upon his lips when he ſpoke to her, that his eyes were fixed upon hers; and that her image followed him inceſſantly, that he thought but of her while he was awake, nor dreamt of ought elſe when he ſlept. "What," ſaid he to himſelf, "can be the matter with me? In what manner do I, on my arrival here, repay the kindneſs of a man, who has ſaved me from the grave? I in love! I, unhappy wretch, with a girl deſtined to poſſeſs an immenſe fortune, and to chuſe amongſt the higheſt ranks the moſt happy of huſbands. It is certainly impoſſible to ſee her without emotion

and

and aſtoniſhment, ſurely nature with all her attractions was never yet ſo charming! But let the admiration which ſhe creates in me be as innocent as her charms; far from me be the hope, and doubly far from me be the deſire, the thought of troubling for a moment the repoſe, the ſerenity of that pure angelic mind. Let me love her, but as a ſiſter; is not her father a father to me?

Having taken this reſolution, Montalde perceived that he was reconciled with himſelf. He was calm, but he was dejected; and the buſineſs in which he was engaged ſerved as an excuſe for his dejection. He is naturally ſerious, Plemer uſed to ſay.

The moſt unreſerved confidence was placed in him by this good man. In initiating him into the niceſt ſpeculations of commerce, he perceived him with aſtoniſhment, catch them at a look, comprehend, and ſometimes extend them, and run over in his mind every branch of this vaſt ſcience into its minuteſt ramifications.

After a few months, "My friend," ſaid he, "it is not the ſpirit, but the true genius of commerce that you poſſeſs; and if one day or other you do not out-do me it will be your own fault. I will in-

ſure

ſure you the greateſt fortune, if you will uſe the means to acquire it. But it is firſt incumbent upon me to put you in the way. I ſhall do it in a moderate manner. Don't croſs me by contradicting me. You ſhall take care of my buſineſs for ſix years. Your ſervice cannot be eſtimated at leſs than ſix thouſand livres.....no, not leſs, if you pleaſe. Let me finiſh what I am going to ſay. You are a prudent man, and one thouſand livres will be enough for your expences. Here then at the end of ſix years is a ſaving of thirty thouſand livres. They are your own. Well, from this preſent time let us employ your ſavings, and ſend them as a venture by one of my ſhips. If it makes two ſucceſsful voyages your capital will be doubled. "And if it fails?" ſaid the young man. "If it ſhould," ſaid Plemer, "we will begin over again, and you will owe me another ſix years.."——"My whole life," ſaid Montalde. "With all my heart," ſaid Plemer, "my bargain will be the better for it; and you ſee I riſk nothing in giving you money beforehand.

"I plainly perceive, ſir," anſwered Montalde, "that you will act as a father. Be it ſo, do for your child whatever ſeems good to you. Far from bluſhing at it, he will be proud to owe every thing to your bounty."

A conver ſation

A converſation like this, made Montalde's ſituation ſtill more painful, for new favours were new ties for him; nor could he avail himſelf of abſence, the reſource of weak minds. Bound by gratitude, he ſaw himſelf deſtined to live with the angel he adored, without daring even to aſpire to pleaſe her. In a ſhort time ſhe will enter into her engagements, and her heart ſhould be at liberty to follow her hand; to endeavour to violate that liberty would be in his eyes the vileſt and moſt deteſtable of crimes. Friendſhip, confidence, the laws of hoſpitality, would be betrayed by a word, by a look, by a ſigh, which might diſcloſe his love. Ah! rather die a thouſand deaths than to exiſt a moment under the weight of ſuch ingratitude.

"This houſe," ſaid he, "is inviolable, and I have it in my power to be either a monſter or a hero. A hero! yes, I ſhall be one, if I have ſtrength of mind to command myſelf. Heaven, of whom I will implore it, will be ſo gracious as to grant it me."

He now collected all the force of his mind to govern his looks, his words, and his actions, to conceal the ſecret of his love, which was daily in-

creaſing, and which the innocent behaviour of Gabrielle tended ſtill to inflame.

The chimera of all huſbands at Paris, being that of forming to their will the diſpoſition of a young woman, the attention of all mothers is to bring up their daughters in ſuch habits of diſſimulation and reſerve as leave nothing decided in their characters. A young woman till ſhe marries is a kind of chryſalis in the world, until the moment when ſpreading out its wings, it changes into a butterfly. In the provinces, the diſpoſition of young people is not laid under the like reſtraint, nor is it a rule of decency with them to conceal the ſecrets of their hearts. Gabrielle, from her infancy, had been ſuffered to ſpeak her ſentiments without reſerve; but whether through the influence of good examples, or an exquiſite degree of ſentiment, the inſtinct of well-diſpoſed minds, nothing reprehenſible ever reſulted from this happy liberty.

The admiſſion of Montalde to the intimacy of the family, did not in the leaſt alter the behaviour of Gabrielle. Madame Plemer ſhewed him thoſe delicate attentions which ſhe could have wiſhed him even not to perceive, but which were the more pleaſing, as they ſeemed involuntary. Gabrielle followed

followed their example. It was a mixture of eſteem and habitual good-will, which, without too much freedom, had nothing in it but what was perfectly natural; and this politeneſs of ſentiment, which gave a charm to friendſhip, would not have ſhewn any difference between Gabrielle and her mother.

But none ſave Montalde perceived theſe ſigns of an infant paſſion. At one time the ſoft languor of a look caſt on him; at another the broken accents of a timid voice; ſometimes a faint bluſh, which animated her countenance when ſhe addreſſed him, or a ſlight trembling of her fair hand, as ſhe poured out his tea; and oftener, the emotion ſhe would feel whenever he expreſſed the exceſs of his gratitude to her mother. From all theſe ſigns he ſuggeſted to himſelf that ſhe had more than mere friendſhip for him; and it was then that he experienced the moſt cruel of all the torments of love, in compariſon of which the condition of Tantalus was but a ſlight infliction.

"Theſe muſt be the ſymptoms of love, or I am much deceived," ſaid he, "as yet feeble, and in its infant ſtate, and which, unknown to her, may make a dangerous progreſs. What will become of me? This is the moment that I ſtand in need of all my

reſolution!" And the more the ſenſibility of Gabrielle diſcloſed itſelf, by a thouſand ingenuous kindneſſes, which he perceived but too clearly, the more pains did he take to conceal his in the bottom of his heart, and under the diſguiſe of a ſedate and modeſt air and behaviour.

Inflamed as his heart was with a hidden fire, yet he never ſuffered a ſpark of it to eſcape from his eyes; happy had it been for him to have had nothing more than theſe firſt conflicts to encounter!

When the adventures of Montalde were repeated by Plemer, to his wife and daughter, he had joked with him upon his want of politeneſs, in not having compoſed a fine panegyric on the Counteſs's birth-day. Gabrielle laid hold of this pleaſantry, and when her mother's birth-day came, ſhe aſked him if he deſigned to let that occaſion eſcape him, without writing a few ſtanzas. "And who will ſing them?"—"I," replied ſhe. Judge with what ardour his muſe was animated. Wit was not employed for the purpoſe; but the moſt delicate ſentiment, the moſt affecting piety, and the tendereſt filial love, which from her maternal behaviour had made its way into the ſoul of the poet, dictated the eulogium

eulogium of this excellent mother which the daughter was to ſing.

Her amiable diſpoſition in every particular, was depicted with a colouring ſo ſoft, ſuch delicate touches, in ſuch an animated ſtile, yet ſo perfectly free from flattery, that a modeſt woman might liſten to it without a bluſh; it was the mirror of her ſoul.

Though Plemer was naturally blunt, yet he was a man of great ſenſibility. The voice of his daughter, employed in the moſt natural and juſt praiſe of the woman he adored, the preſence of his friends, the charming ſpectacle of this domeſtic feſtival, all united together, ſoftened him to ſuch a degree, that he burſt into tears. Madame Plemer too wept with delight; but the feelings of the young and tender Gabrielle at every inſtant interrupted her voice with ſobbings; and, at the laſt couplet, which ſhe had ſcarcely ſtrength to finiſh, ſhe *ſunk into the arms of her mother.* Plemer drew near, and embraced her, and all their *friends were eager to* pay her the tribute of emotion, with which they were affected. Montalde alone kept at a diſtance.

But Madame Plemer would *not ſuffer him to remain ſo.* "Come, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "allow me to

make my acknowledgments to you for thoſe delightful ſenſations you have juſt made me experience."——He leant forwards to kiſs her hand, but ſhe embraced him; and, as he roſe up, he felt his hand preſſed between the two hands of Gabrielle, who, *ſtill weeping, exclaimed, in a voice that would* have ſoftened marble.—"Ah! Sir, my father was right to love you."—Who can expreſs his feelings! From this moment he gave himſelf up for loſt.

It was Plemer's wiſh, in honour of his wife, to give an entertainment on the water, and at night an illumination from on board, announced it to be ready. She was eſcorted thither in triumph, accompanied by muſic, leading her daughter in her hand;—and although none but friends were invited, yet the company was very numerous. No coſt was ſpared to make the repaſt, and during the entertainment the two banks of the Loire never ceaſed re-echoing the ſounds of a delightful concert. Never did more ſincere joy prevail on any occaſion; but this joy was ſuddenly changed into the moſt alarming fears.

The night was remarkably beautiful, the moon ſhone with the moſt perfect brightneſs, her brilliant luſtre on the waters ſerved as a guide to the rowers;

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and Plemer, having taken every precaution that his gueſts ſhould be ſafely conducted from the veſſel to the ſhore, was following, the moſt happy of men, when ſtepping into the boat, his foot ſlipped, and he fell into the river.—Montalde inſtantly plunged in after him, though he could not ſwim, and ſeizing with one hand the end of a rope that hung out of the veſſel, he caught hold of Plemer with the other, and prevented his being drawn under the bottom of the ſhip. At this inſtant the ſailors came to their aſſiſtance, and took them both up into the boat.

As ſoon as Plemer recovered the uſe of his ſenſes, "Well," ſaid he, "now which of us is inſolvent?" The young man, ſtill ſeized with fear on his account, embraced him and wept for joy. They got to ſhore, where Madame Plemer and her daughter were waiting for them, terrified at the cries which they had heard.

Make yourſelves happy," ſaid Plemer, on landing, "thank God, here I am ſafe. I fell overboard. I was on the point of being drowned, and Montalde has ſaved my life."

On hearing this, Madame Plemer embraced her huſband; and Gabrielle, in a tranſport of gratitude

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and joy, ſeized, and preſſed in her arms the man who ſaved her father. "Oh! ſir, what ſervice have you done us! I owe you more than my life," ſaid ſhe, ſtill preſſing him againſt her boſom.

"Good Heaven," cried he, tearing himſelf from the arms of her he adored, "Grant, oh grant me fortitude."

With Madame Plemer, who embraced the young man in her turn, he could with leſs danger give himſelf up to the emotion of a mutual friendſhip. Every thing at this moment was mixed with the remains of anxiety, and the exceſs of joy; and neither the heart of Gabrielle, nor that of Montalde, had time for reflexion. But when, being reſtored to themſelves, each of them was capable of thinking on what had juſt paſſed,—"What is it I have done," ſaid ſhe, weeping, "that he ſhould thus reject me! I forgot for a moment, I confeſs, the conduct ſuitable to my age; but in what moment, and on what account! I embraced Montalde as I would have embraced the altar of the Deity who ſhould have ſaved my father. Ah! Montalde, if this impulſe, involuntary as it was, appears to you improper in a virtuous mind, you muſt certainly have been an orphan from your cradle, neither has a mother

a mother ſmiled upon you, nor a father careſſed you; you are not acquainted with the force of blood, nor with the affections of nature. Cruel man! how could you treat me ſo ſeverely? What was then your opinion of me?"

The afflicted Gabrielle could not ſleep; her bed was bathed with her tears, and for want of reſt, her head became diſordered; her blood boiled in her veins, and her parched breath exhaled itſelf in ſighs. At length, calling to mind what ſhe had been told of the torments of love;—"I fear 'tis all over with me," ſaid ſhe, "I felt that generous heart palpitate againſt my boſom; a violent flame has ſpread itſelf over my frame, and it is that which conſumes me. O my dear father, forgive the intoxication and the delirium of my gratitude. Can I do otherwiſe than love, can I ſufficiently love the man who at the peril of his own life has ſaved your's. Yes, after you, my dear mother, I hold nothing elſe ſo dear in the world. I know he is without fortune; but what would the moſt brilliant fortune be in compariſon with your life, that I owe him. Ah! let that be his riches; and may the daughter of Plemer have never any other huſband but the man who has ſaved her father."

The

The ſituation of Montalde was ſtill more affecting. Although innocent as yet, he could no longer anſwer for preſerving that innocence, which an unguarded moment might rob him of for ever. The vile means of ſeduction were far from his mind; and he ſo far poſſeſſed his own eſteem, as not to apprehend any thing baſe or ſhameful in his affection.

But he reflected, that perhaps, this amiable young woman was in ſpite of him already ſeduced; and if her heart was infected with love, if ſhe exhaled when near him the ſame fires that conſumed his own boſom, if, in fine, neither the one nor the other ſhould be any longer able to conceal an hopeleſs paſſion, what would be the iſſue of this multitude of evils with which he ſhould leave her ſurrounded, or fall into himſelf.

A crime which is involuntary, when we have ſeen the danger without avoiding it, is it not ſtill a crime? Have I not had, and have I not ſtill an expedient to fly and take refuge in abſence?

My paſſion is unſurmountable, yet far from me be every weak excuſe. Far from me be that probity which exhibits itſelf in fine words, and which conſiders itſelf as abſolved by vain excuſes from the

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ſhame of a defeat. No! faith and honour ſhould never be expoſed to any riſk: Since the ſucceſs of trial is doubtful, that trial ſhould be avoided; and I am ſtill maſter of this reſolution. It is certainly dreadful for me to be ſeparated from the only friend I now have in the world; dreadful too it is again to encounter want and miſery. It is doubly dreadful to tear myſelf away from Gabrielle; but the more painful this effort proves, the more it is neceſſary." After this manner ſpake Montalde; and impatient to make ſure of himſelf by putting theſe meaſures into execution, he waited the return of day to go and ſee Plemer."—"Go to ſee him? How ſhall I ſee him, or what ſhall I ſay? Loaded with his favours, honoured with his confidence, penetrated with the ſenſe of his goodneſs, which with ſo much open-heartedneſs he laviſhes daily upon me, how can I ſummon up reſolution to tell him I intend to leave him? And what excuſe ſhall I make for this precipitate departure! It muſt be, however; I muſt appear unjuſt, ungrateful, wicked, without being ſo.—O! dear ſelf-eſteem! kind teſtimonies of the purity of my intentions! you will accompany me in my exile, in my miſery, in that vagrant and unhappy life, which I ſhall drag on far from Nantez, far from this loved and reſpectable family, where every good ſeemed to await me. I ſhall ſtill have

you

you to accompany me, and, if poſſible, you will conſole me." After having reaſoned thus with himſelf he felt his heart more at eaſe; he gave vent to his ſighs, and a torrent of tears ſtreamed down his cheeks. Thus had paſſed the night, when he went to ſeek Plemer, in order to take his leave of him, as pale and trembling as a criminal led to execution.

Madame Plemer had invited the worthy Dupre to Nantez, and placed her at the head of her domeſtic affairs; the good woman met Montalde on the ſtairs.—"O, good God!" ſaid ſhe, "what a condition you are in! your eyes ſunk into your head; your face pale and wan; are you going to fall ſick again?"——"I hope not," ſaid he, "but it is true that I am not well"—"I believe I know your complaint," replied ſhe, and I fear it will not eaſily be cured." My complaint!" replied Montalde, with ſurpriſe, "What is it? what do you mean?"—— "Ah, M. Montalde, you muſt not diſſemble with me. I love you, and ever ſince I have been in this houſe I have obſerved and pitied you"——"Indeed," replied he, "I do not underſtand you; but whatever you may think about me, I beg you to be ſilent." —"Dont alarm yourſelf," ſaid ſhe, on going away. "I ſhall not be the firſt to ſpeak: But you and the young lady! *Ah! take care of your eyes.*"

And

And 'tis too true," ſaid he to himſelf, " this good woman has found out the ſecret of my heart. No. —Love cannot be a long time concealed, and if I would prevent mine from betraying itſelf, I muſt haſten away. Let me no longer defer it."

He went immediately to Plemer, " do you know my friend," ſaid that worthy man, " that Gabrielle ſtill feels the impreſſion ſhe received yeſterday on account of her father's accident? She has had a burning fever all night, and has ſtill a violent head-ache. Her mother is with her.—I am going to ſee her.—You ſhall go with me.—It will calm her ſpirits to ſee the man who has ſaved my life." Montalde accompanied him to Gabrielle's bedſide.

" My dear child?" ſaid Plemer, " how happens it you are not yet recovered from your fright. Here we both are, and the danger is all over.—You have nothing to do but rejoice. Montalde has been alarmed as well as you; and he ſtill looks pale upon it; but as for me, I feel no more of it, and life has never been more agreeable to me than ſince I owed it to him. Gabrielle's eyes, fixed upon her father while he was ſpeaking, ſparkled with the brighteſt luſtre.—" Has not ſhe ſtill a little fever remaining upon her?" ſaid he to Madame Plemer. " Let

us ſee? I am no judge of the matter.—Montalde, you that ought to know ſomething about it, feel her pulſe."—"Well?"—"Yes, 'tis I, 'tis her father who deſires you to feel her pulſe. Are you afraid her hand ſhould burn you, or that her head-ache be catching?"

What were Montalde's emotions, when he drew near to Gabrielle? ſhe letting her arm fall upon his hand, kept her eyes fixed upon her mother, as if ſhe would draw that aſſiſtance from her of which her feeble heart ſtood ſo much in need. But when ſhe felt her lover's hand preſs ſoftly againſt the artery, ſhe was ſeized with a ſudden emotion, which ſhe endeavoured to conceal from him, by withdrawing her hand. O, by how many imperceptible ſigns does love diſcover itſelf to love!

In order to conceal his perturbation with a ſeeming eaſe, Montalde obſerved, "that the pulſe was not yet tranquil, but that in a little time it would."—"I hope it will," ſaid Gabrielle, lifting up her eyes to heaven. "My ſituation would be dreadful indeed, if what I ſuffered laſt night was to be of long duration. It really turned my head."—"My dear child," ſaid the mother, "it is a difficult matter, with ſuch hearts as ours to be happy, and it rarely

rarely happens."—"True!" ſaid Plemer, "but if heaven had made us leſs ſenſible and leſs affectionate than we are, ſhould we be equally capable of enjoying our domeſtic happineſs? Do you think that a man who lives for himſelf only, enjoys himſelf more! He eſcapes a little ſuffering ſometimes; but of what heartfelt gratifications is not he, at the ſame time, deprived? He who does not love, is not beloved; and what happineſs can ſuch a man find in life? I know what my ſenſibility coſts me; but whatſoever pain it cauſes me, I would not part with a grain of it for heaps of gold. Are not you of my way of thinking, Montalde?"——"Indeed!" ſaid the young man, "We cannot have too much ſenſibility; while we love only thoſe we ought to love, in ſuch ſituations we cannot feel too much." Theſe words, accompanied by a look all round him, diffuſed a little calm through the veins of the fair Gabrielle. But this calm, which her parents took for that of the mind, was only a calm of the ſenſes, and Montalde perceived that it was only the languor of a deep melancholy. He knew the cauſe of it; he perceived there was no time to be loſt in applying the moſt ſpeedy remedy, and ſought immediately an opportunity to ſpeak to Plemer.

"What I am going to ſay, Sir," ſaid he, in coming up to him, "will no doubt aſtoniſh you; but however extraordinary the reſolution that I have taken may appear, do not aſk me the cauſe, and have the goodneſs to pardon me. I love and revere you as a moſt virtuous and true friend. A father could not have done more for me than you have; I am ſenſible of it, nor ſhall I ever forget it till I ceaſe to live, and yet, I conjure you to give me your permiſſion to leave you."—Plemer ſtarted up from his ſeat with ſurpriſe and aſtoniſhment: "Leave me! you, Montalde! and for what reaſon, if you pleaſe? Has any of my family diſpleaſed you? I ſhould hardly believe it."—"Ah! Sir, what a queſtion! I have received nothing here, but marks of eſteem, of benevolence, and of goodneſs."——"What is it then that drives you away? The eſtabliſhment I have made you is very moderate; but ſpeak out, I can———."—"Do not, I beg you, load me with ſuch unjuſt ſurmiſes: You are not a ſtranger to the ſentiments of my heart. It was, you know, with regret that I ſuffered your goodneſs ſo far to exceed my hopes. I have but too great reaſon to ſpeak of the nobleneſs of your mind; you are but too generous."—"And without any cauſe of complaint, you are going to leave me.—"I am diſtracted at it, but a duty the moſt ſacred compels me to go."—"I underſtand

ſtand you; your mother is afflicted at your abſence? ſhe deſires you to return to her?——Let her come here, my houſe ſhall be her home, my wife ſhall be her friend, and we ſhall all be the happier for it.

Montalde, diſtreſſed at ſo much goodneſs, anſwered, that his mother was not unhappy on account of his being from her; that he knew her to be contented and quiet with his ſiſters, and that ſhe wanted for nothing.

"Let me know, then," inſiſted Plemer, "what obliges you to leave me?"—"My deſtiny," ſaid the young man.——"I cannot underſtand what you mean," ſaid Plemer, with violence.—"Your deſtiny! Ah! Montalde, deſtiny is a poor apology for faults which are without excuſe; nor is it with this word, ſo void of ſenſe, that a man like you ſhould juſtify himſelf."

"That unquiet roving diſpoſition," ſaid Montalde, "is what I call my deſtiny, which I have received from nature, and which will never let me be long in any ſituation. You have ſeen it——".

"Yes," ſays Plemer, "I have ſeen you quit a triffling Counteſs, an arrogant Marquis, I know not what ſort of a judge, and his knave of a Secretary;

there is nothing uncommon in all that. But I, who am a plain man, a good man, I who love you, I who expected to have paſſed my life with you! No, Sir, this caprice is not to be believed. There is ſomewhat in it quite incomprehenſible to me; and, if you do not explain it, I ſhall conſider you either a bad man, or out of your ſenſes. You have only to make your choice.

Oh! ſays Montalde, "I agree with you that I am mad, but do not," ſaid he, falling on his knees, "do not think I am a bad man, I conjure you. I love you. I revere you. I am not ungrateful. I would ſhed the laſt drop of blood in your defence.—"

"Leave kneeling, Montalde, look me in the face. Why do you leave me? In a mind like your's, this levity, this caprice, this inconſtancy, is not natural."

"For Heaven's ſake," ſaid the young man, interrupting him, "do not any longer torture me, but give me up to my miſery."

"No, I am determined! I will not give you up. I am reſolved to know, if I muſt loſe my friend, how and for what reaſon I loſe him. If he had wiſhed to leave me before he had done any thing

for

for me, I ſhould have let him go; and, much as he would have diſtreſſed me, I would have forgiven him; but after having ſaved my life, after having attached me to him by the kindeſt and the ſtrongeſt ties, to break them, and to leave me! No," ſaid he, weeping, "no, it ſhall never be, or I will know the reaſon why."—"I am grieved to tell you," ſaid Montalde, "that you will never know it."

"No! why then, I gueſs it; your ſilence explains it: You are in love with my wife or my daughter. Yes, Sir, that is the ſecret I cannot draw from you."—"I, Sir, in love with your wife, what a thought!"—"And why not?" replied Plemer bluntly. "She is yet handſome enough to make a conqueſt; but, if it is not ſhe that turns your head, 'tis my daughter then."—"Alas! ſir, it is."—"Ah! Montalde, and why did you not ſpeak? I have intended her for you more than ſix months ſince."

Theſe words had ſuch an effect on poor Montalde, that, if people died with joy, he would. He fell down like a man ſtruck with lightning, and remained motionleſs at Plemer's feet.

"Pſhaw," ſaid Plemer, ſeeing him in this ſituation, "you were indeed very much in love! Poor young man!

man! and you were determined to go away without ſaying a word about it, for fear of offending me. How little do you know of me! However you have acted like a man of honour. Get up, and go with me to your mother-in-law. Ah, when I relate this ſcene to her, how ſhe will laugh and cry! And my daughter, it is ſhe that will feel the worth of a heart ſo truly eſtimable. She will love you tenderly. I am ſure of it."

"I hope ſhe will;" ſaid Montalde, "for ſhe is kind enough to believe that her father owes his life to me, and of all my claims to her heart, this ſhall be always the moſt ſacred."

They went together, "Here, madam," ſaid Plemer to his wife, leading Montalde to her, "here is a man whom I have aſked what recompence his having ſaved my life merits, and he leaves it to your deciſion." (Gabrielle was preſent) "And for my part," ſaid Madame Plemer, "I will make my daughter judge of it."

After a moment's pauſe, Gabrielle bluſhingly replied, "What recompence can be equal to ſo great an obligation? All our fortunes! and even that is inſufficient."

"Fortune!"

"Fortune!" ſays Plemer, diſdainfully, "He is not fond of money. But you, my child, is there nothing better you can offer him?" She caſt down her eyes. "I have told you my dear father, that there can be nothing too valuable to repay him ſuch an obligation."

"If I was in your place," ſaid Madame Plemer, "I ſhould know what to offer him."

"And ſo ſhould I, my dear mother, if I were in your's."—"And was I in his," ſaid Plemer, "I ſhould know very well what to aſk. But ſince neither of you will explain yourſelves, I will! I give my daughter's hand to Montalde." "And I her heart," ſaid Madame Plemer.—"And I my life," ſaid Gabrielle modeſtly. "It is very right that I ſhould live for him, when it is through him that you are alive."

"I will now tell you," ſaid Plemer, "that with his heart brim-full of love, he was about to leave us, rather than diſturb the peace of the family; and I value him more for that conduct than all he has done to ſerve me; for though you may find a thouſand men, who, under the influence of an inſtantaneous determination, can perform a generous action.

tion. Yet it is but ſeldom you will meet with one uniformly virtuous. He then, whom I give you, my beloved wife, for a ſon-in-law, and you, my daughter, for a huſband, is this *Singular Man.*

FINIS.